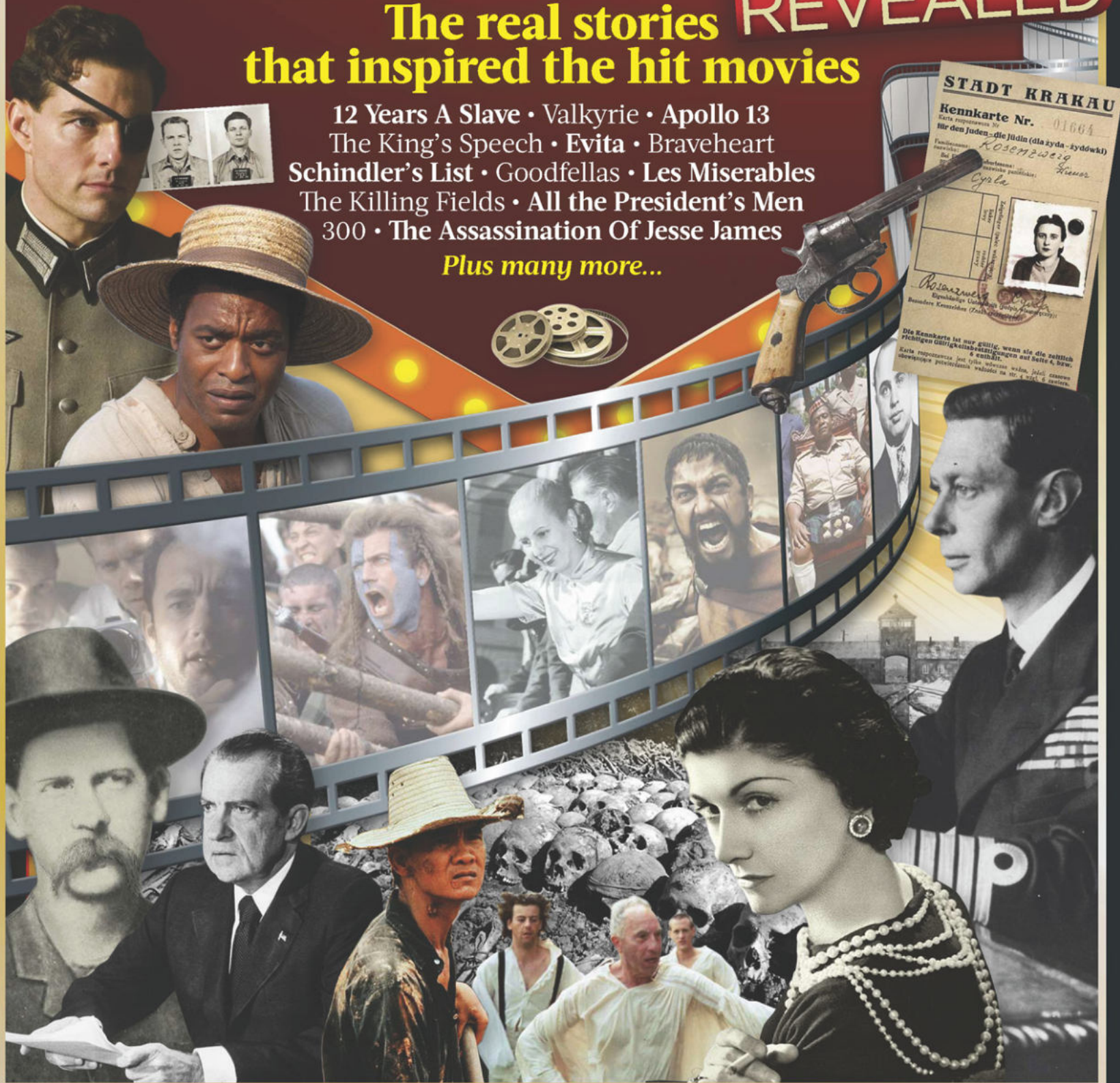


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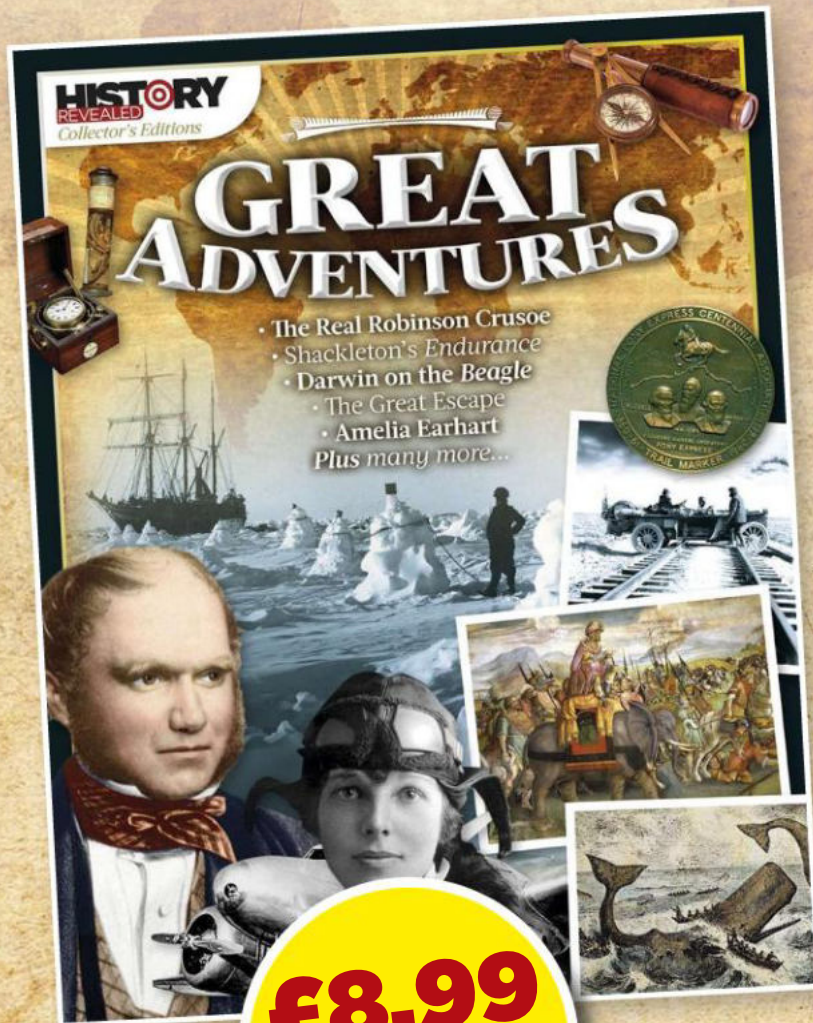
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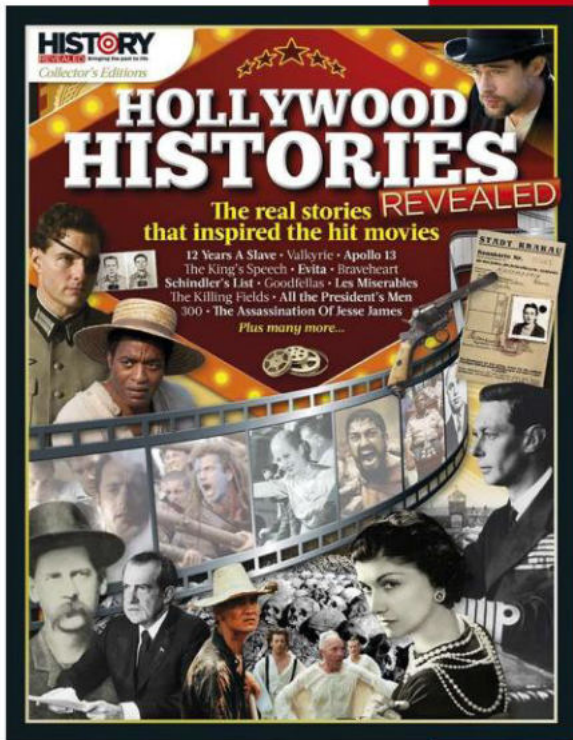
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Often, our first exposure to some of the most remarkable stories from the past comes from watching movies with the famous epithet “**based on a true story**”.

But so often the story in **the movie is far from reality**. Sometimes, characters are changed to suit a writer or director’s whim, sometimes events happen out of order, or parts of the story are altered, and sometimes **the whole thing is a complete fabrication**.

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Paul

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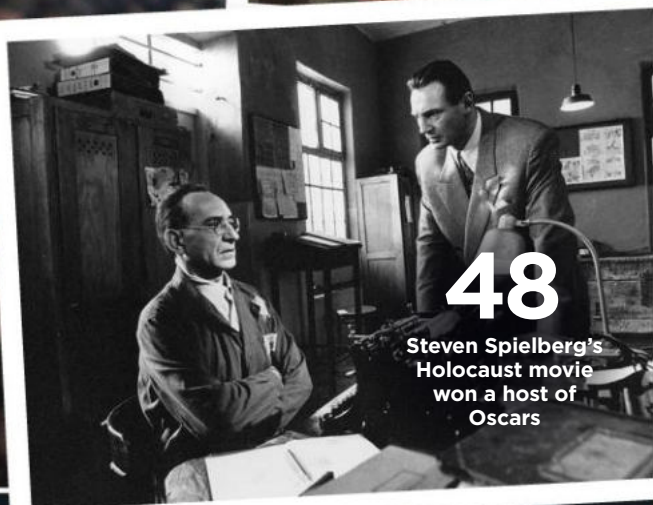
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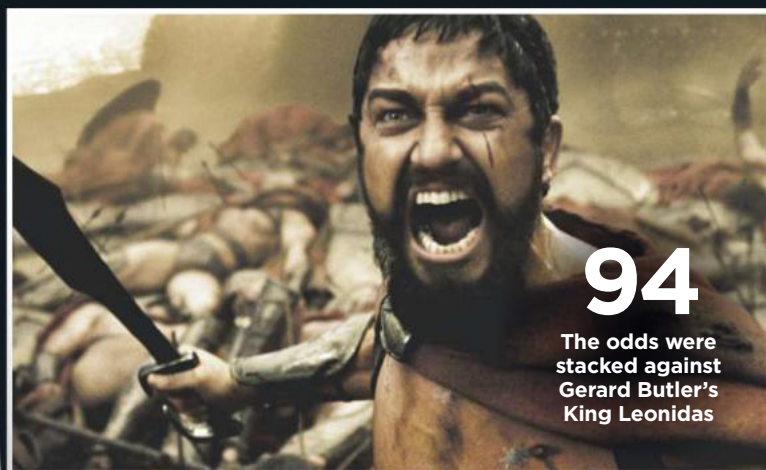
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Braveheart

Mark Glancy separates the fact from the fiction of Mel Gibson's historically inspired epic, *Braveheart*, and discovers a legend that needed no exaggeration...

Mel Gibson's biopic of the Scottish patriot William Wallace is one of the most controversial historical films ever made. The debates surrounding the film can be corralled into two opposing camps. Its detractors regard it as a historical farrago. Like Gibson's other forays into history, *Braveheart* is by turns cloyingly sentimental and savagely violent, and the past is twisted and distorted to suit these ends. Numerous articles, books and websites have been written detailing its falsehoods. Nevertheless, its admirers enjoy it as an action-packed epic and as a celebration of Scottish heroism, history and heritage. Not since the musical *Brigadoon* (1954) had a film so lovingly featured bagpipes, kilts and misty highland landscapes. These qualities, together with the film's celebration of the rebellion of a common man against an authoritarian power, enabled *Braveheart* to win five Academy Awards® and earn over \$200 million at box offices around the world.

MAN OF MYSTERY

Long before *Braveheart*, Wallace's story was told in Blind Harry's epic poem, *The Wallace*. For centuries, this was second only to *The Bible* as the most widely read book in Scotland. Written more than a century after Wallace's death, Blind Harry's account is compromised by the limitations of oral history and the aim of recreating Wallace as a chivalrous hero. Historians have struggled to piece together even the most basic facts of Wallace's life, including the year and place of his birth. Blind Harry placed his birth in Elderslie in Renfrewshire, though claims are also made for Ellerslie in Ayrshire. The year is variously estimated to have been between 1260 and 1278. It is thought that his father was a nobleman and land-owner, and



William may have been educated, so he was not quite the man-of-the-people that Mel Gibson's screen characterisation suggests. All agree, however, that he cut a striking figure. The tall, muscular, handsome man's impressive stature and calm manner gave him an air of authority that inspired his followers.

During Wallace's youth, Scotland enjoyed relative stability and prosperity, as well as peace with England. But when the longstanding Scottish King, Alexander III, died in 1286, Scotland was thrown into turmoil. The King's closest heir was his three year-old granddaughter, Margaret, the Maid of Norway. King Edward I of England proposed that his son, the future King Edward II, should marry Margaret, thereby drawing the two countries together, but Margaret became ill on the sea journey to Scotland in 1290,

and died soon after reaching Orkney. Her death left a host of tenuous yet competing claims to the throne. During the interregnum, civil war loomed as factions gathered behind the two strongest contenders, John Balliol and Robert the Bruce. The Guardians of Scotland, a group of bishops and lords appointed to safeguard the country's interests, invited Edward I to settle the matter, known as the Great Cause, 1291-2. Edward, however, had recently conquered Wales, and was intent on using the Scottish crisis to strengthen his control over Scotland's compliant nobility, and thereby subdue the country itself. Edward insisted that English troops should take over Scottish castles. He required Scotland's noblemen to

THE FACTS

Director:

Mel Gibson

Cast:

Mel Gibson,
Patrick McGoohan,
Peter Hanly,
Sophie Marceau,
Catherine
McCormack,
Angus Macfadyen

OUT OF THE BLUE

The iconic **blue war paint** streaked across the faces of these Scottish soldiers is very unlikely to have been used in the real battle. Ancient Scots *did* paint their faces blue to **scare off the Romans**, but that was many centuries earlier.

“They may take our lives, but they’ll never take our freedom!”

LEFT: William Wallace leads the Scots into battle against the English

MAIN: In the movie, Mel Gibson heads up an army that appears much more tribal than it would have been



ODD COUPLE

The romance between **Isabella of France** and William Wallace, and the suggestion that Isabella was pregnant with Wallace's child at the time of his death, is nonsensical. Isabella was **nine years old** when Wallace was executed and she had not yet been to England.



“I’ve come to beg for the life of William Wallace...”

FAR LEFT: The Wallace of the film makes quite an impression on Isabella of France

LEFT: The real Isabella has a fascinating story – she waged war against her husband, Edward II of England, successfully overthrowing him in 1327

WHAT'S IN A NAME?

Reportedly, William Wallace was **never known as Braveheart** - it seems that nickname was awarded, posthumously, to Robert the Bruce. According to folklore, **Bruce's heart** was carried into a battle of the Crusades after his death.



"You have bled with Wallace, now bleed with me..."

LEFT: After Wallace's capture and death, Robert the Bruce went on to become King of the Scots, and is still considered a national hero

MAIN: In the film, Bruce betrays Wallace at the Battle of Falkirk, but actually he was one of the rebel leader's most important followers

< take an oath of allegiance, recognising him not only as King of England but as the 'superior lord of Scotland'. Having decided that John Balliol had the strongest claim to the Scottish crown, Edward also ensured that when Balliol was enthroned, on St Andrew's Day in 1292, the new King of Scotland pledged his loyalty to the English monarch.

Not all Scots were so compliant. Wallace's father is said to have refused to take an oath of fealty to the King of England and to have died in a skirmish with an English knight at Loudoun Hill in 1291. This, if accurate, and other indignities inflicted by English troops, added to William's

bitter resentment. His involvement with Scotland's fight for independence thus began with small-scale attacks on English soldiers, but as his reputation grew, he attracted scores of followers, and the attacks became more ambitious, including raids on English garrisons.

RISE OF A HERO

To the English he was of course a notorious outlaw, but to the Scots he was a hero, who proved that the English were not inviolable conquerors. This was certainly the lesson of his greatest victory, in the Battle of Stirling Bridge on

SINISTER SET UP

Edward I, who, in the film, grants English nobles the right to sleep with peasant brides on their wedding nights - but this didn't really happen

11 September 1297. By this time, Wallace had joined forces with another Scot nationalist, Andrew Murray, but they were still far outnumbered by the English troops. The two forces aligned on either side of the Forth with Stirling Bridge between them. The English were so confident of victory over the ragtag Scots that they proceeded towards them, crossing the narrow bridge from the south to the north bank. The Scots waited until half the troops were across, and then launched their attack. The English were trapped between the bridge and a tight bend in the river. In the ensuing slaughter, over 5,000 English troops (cavalry and infantry) died.

This was an astonishing victory, over a far more powerful army, and in the months that followed, Wallace was emboldened to launch attacks



“Every man dies, not every man really lives...”

LEFT: A solemn William Wallace, shackled and beaten, is taken to his grim execution
ABOVE: William Wallace is so revered to this day that this memorial, near the place of his death in London, is still regularly visited by Scottish patriots

HARD TO WATCH

Gibson's Wallace had a considerably **tamer execution** than the real-life one – possibly to make it easier on modern film viewers. Instead of the full **hanging, drawing and quartering** treatment, Wallace is just hanged, stretched and gutted.

“To the English he was a notorious outlaw, but to the Scots he was a hero”

in northern England (although in Northumberland and Cumberland rather than on York, as the film had it). Back at home, he was knighted and became a Guardian of Scotland.

COST OF FREEDOM

Wallace's fortunes turned when King Edward I led an invasion of Scotland with a vast army, including many Irish and Welsh troops. With a hail of arrows falling upon them, the Scots lost the Battle of Falkirk on 22 July 1298. Wallace was not yet captured or killed – he went on to serve as an envoy, seeking support for Scotland in France and elsewhere. Edward placed a high price on Wallace's head, and he was eventually betrayed and captured. He now faced a gruesome execution. On 23 August 1305, he was dragged through the streets of London to

Smithfield, where he was hanged, drawn and quartered.

The war against the English went on, initially under King Robert the Bruce, and until the Treaty of Berwick granted Scottish independence in 1357. Yet Wallace's legend never dimmed. His uncompromising stance on independence, his refusal to bow to English power and authority, and his martyrdom, make him an irresistible figurehead for the nationalist cause. It is a cause that persists to this day, as the upcoming referendum demonstrates, and it is ill-served by a film as distorted as *Braveheart*. Its fabrications would make even Blind Harry blush. Wallace's story hardly requires such embellishments, and the tale gains little by being twisted to suit the contrivances of the modern action film. 🍷

Ones to watch: Scottish history films

The Bruce

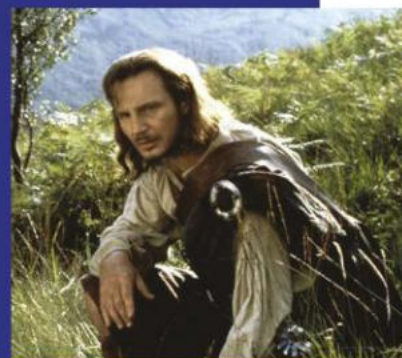
(Bob Carruthers, 1996)
In the wake of *Braveheart*, the story of Scotland's warrior King is given a disappointingly low-budget treatment.

Mary, Queen of Scots

(Charles Jarrott, 1971)
Vanessa Redgrave and Glenda Jackson star as Mary Stuart and Elizabeth Tudor.

Rob Roy

(Michael Caton-Jones, 1995) Set in the 18th century, and with Liam



Liam Neeson takes the title role in *Rob Roy*

Neeson in the lead, this is another tale of Scottish heroism and English villainy.



IN MEMORIUM

The National Wallace Monument
towers above nearby Stirling,
commemorating Scotland's hero

GETTY



Valkyrie

Mark Glancy unravels the conspiracy to kill Hitler that inspired one of the surprisingly few blockbusters about the Führer

The 20th July 1944 was a stiflingly hot day in the muggy forests of East Prussia, where Hitler plotted the progress of the war in his military headquarters known as the 'Wolf's Lair'. Hitler's generals dreaded their visits to this gloomy, isolated spot – one referred to it as “a cross between a monastery and a concentration camp” – but their attendance at the military briefings was compulsory. So just after noon on that day, in a conference hut with windows opened in the hope of a breeze, some 21 officers, two stenographers and the Führer himself sat down at a long and heavy oak conference table to consider the latest dispatches. The news was not good. Russian troops advancing along the Eastern Front were little more than 60 miles from the Wolf's Lair. To the west, the Allies had landed on the beaches of Normandy on 6 June, and established a long-awaited second front. Meanwhile in Germany itself, cities were pounded during the day by the American Air Force and at night by the Royal Air Force. Although no one was likely to admit it to Hitler, Germany's defeat now appeared inevitable, even if it was still many months away.

Colonel Claus von Stauffenberg was late arriving at this inevitably tense and reproachful meeting, but the distinguished and trusted officer took a seat less than two metres to the right of Hitler, placing his briefcase just beneath the edge of the conference table. Then, insisting that he needed to ring Berlin urgently, he suddenly left the room. Seven minutes later, the briefcase that he left behind exploded, blasting the table apart, sending flames through the room, and bringing down parts of the ceiling. Three officers and a stenographer were fatally wounded. Several more suffered from concussion, but most of the men around the conference table staggered out of the smoke-filled room in a state of shock. Hitler was among



DEUTSCHLAND ÜBER ALLES

Von Stauffenberg may have opposed Nazism, but **he was a German nationalist** who believed in his country's destiny as Europe's most powerful nation.

the survivors. He had burns to his hair, his right arm and right leg, and he was bleeding. His clothes were in shreds and he had been thrown from his chair, leaving his backside “as blue as a baboon's behind”, as he later joked. But the bomb had not killed him, and he left the conference room determined to find and punish everyone involved in plotting his attempted assassination.

THE PLOT THICKENS

Von Stauffenberg not only carried the two-pound bomb that nearly killed Hitler, he was also at the centre of a wider ring of conspirators who were determined to use the assassination of Hitler to spark a coup d'état that would bring down the Nazi regime. An unlikely traitor, von Stauffenberg belonged to an aristocratic German family that traced its lineage back to the 14th century. He was born at the family's castle in Swabia (south-west Germany) in 1907, and, in keeping with family custom, joined the army in 1926, receiving a commission in 1930. Like other traditional German officers, he was wary of the Nazis on the grounds

“You can serve Germany or the Führer, not both”

MAIN: Herman Göring (in light uniform) examines the damage
ABOVE LEFT: Tom Cruise's casting was unpopular in Germany due to him being a Scientologist

that they were his social inferiors who lacked the discipline and natural authority of the aristocracy. Nevertheless, when Hitler came to power, he took the oath of loyalty and obedience to the Führer that was required of all members of the German armed forces, promising to risk his own life in defence of Hitler's. He served enthusiastically in the invasion of Poland in 1939, believing the Poles to be “rabble” who should be colonized by Germany. He also served in the invasion of France in 1940, and was simultaneously impressed with Hitler's military acumen and alarmed by his seemingly limitless ambitions.

Von Stauffenberg's willingness to join the resistance and to plot Hitler's

THE FACTS

Release date: 2008

Director:

Bryan Singer

Cast:

Tom Cruise, Kenneth Branagh, Bill Nighy, Tom Wilkinson, Terence Stamp, Eddie Izzard

“The briefcase exploded, blasting the table apart, and bringing down parts of the ceiling.”

HITLER'S SPEECH

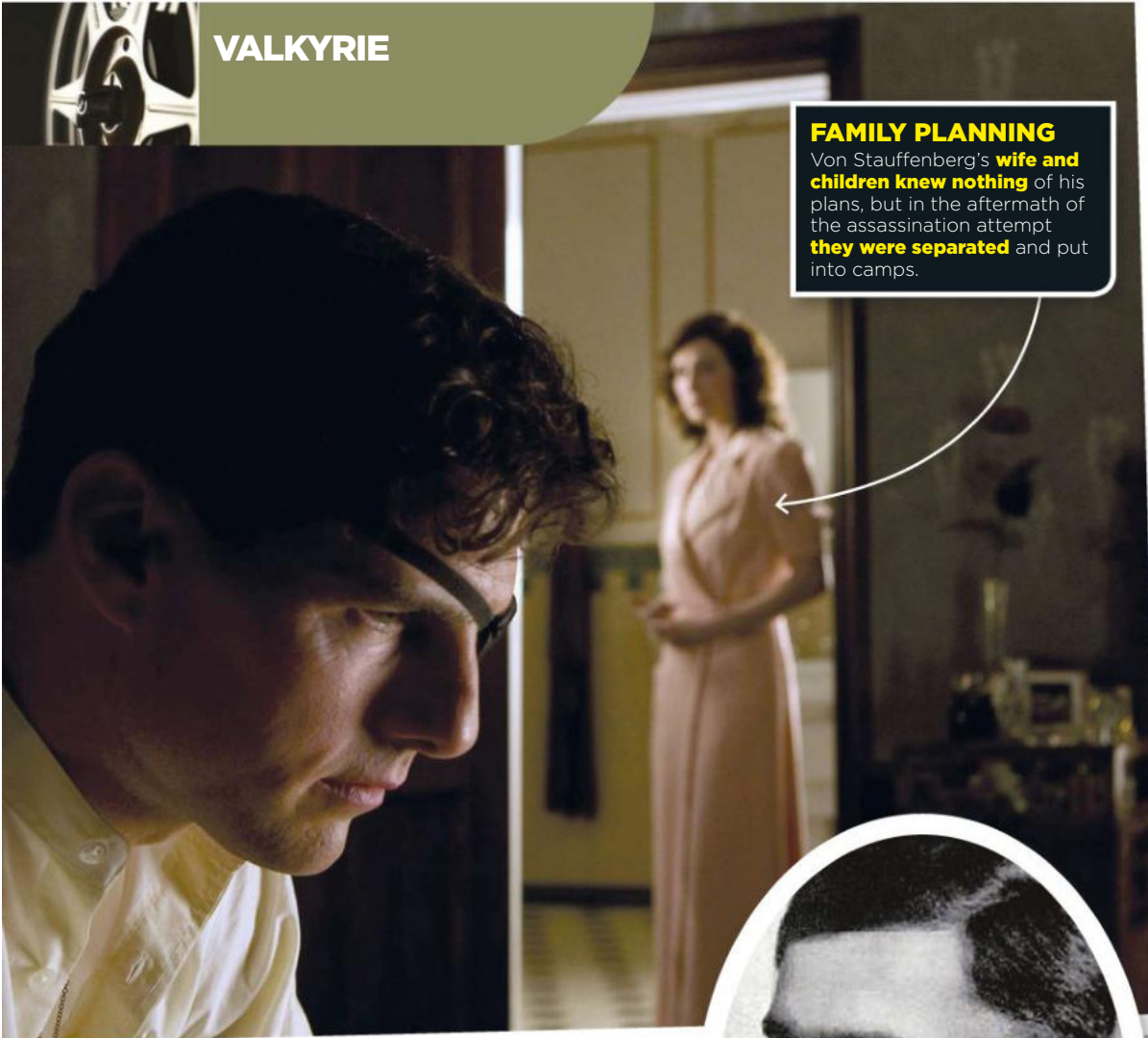
Unlike the majority of the Nazis portrayed by the mostly **British and American actors**, David Bamber's Hitler speaks with a cod-German accent.



Hitler later described his buttocks as being “as blue as a baboon’s behind”.

ABOVE: Adolf Hitler (David Bamber) is helped away by his officers after the blast failed to kill him
LEFT: The scorched uniform of one of his officers illustrates how lucky an escape the Führer had at the Wolf's Lair





FAMILY PLANNING

Von Stauffenberg's **wife and children knew nothing** of his plans, but in the aftermath of the assassination attempt **they were separated** and put into camps.

"I will crush and destroy the criminals who have dared to oppose themselves to Providence and me"

MAIN: Hitler makes a hospital visit to officers injured in the blast BELOW: Today, a memorial stands at Berlin's Bendlerblock, where the conspirators were executed on 21 July 1944

"If I fail, they'll come for you. They'll come for all of you."

ABOVE: In *Valkyrie*, Tom Cruise's Claus von Stauffenberg warns his wife of the potential consequences of his actions

RIGHT: Von Stauffenberg came from a wealthy aristocratic German family, and remained a practicing Catholic even during Nazi rule



LOOKALIKE

Tom Cruise is said to have been attracted to the role due to **his physical resemblance** to Claus von Stauffenberg.

overthrow is likely to have grown in stages. The savagery of the invasion of the Soviet Union, with its mass executions of Jews, Russians and Ukrainians, disgusted him. From 1942, the increasing sense that Hitler was leading Germany into an abyss also hardened his resolve. The injuries he suffered in North Africa in 1943 were devastating – he lost two fingers on his left hand, his entire right hand, and his left eye – and yet they ultimately put him in a position to act. When he recovered, von Stauffenberg was appointed to a post in Germany's Reserve Army, where General Friedrich Olbricht had already developed a plot to use the Reserve Army's powers against Hitler. At the heart of this was Operation Valkyrie, a plan that invested military commanders with authority over all others, including the Gestapo and the

SS, in the event of a domestic uprising. Valkyrie was approved by Hitler on the grounds that it would allow the military to respond effectively to a revolt by foreign workers. But Olbricht and his fellow conspirators saw that if Hitler was assassinated, the resulting confusion could be used as a pretext to put Valkyrie into action and allow the military to overthrow the Nazi regime.

CATALOGUE OF ERRORS

In July 1944, von Stauffenberg was promoted to Chief of Staff of the Reserve Army, serving under General Friedrich Fromm. This was a position that brought him into regular contact with the increasingly reclusive Hitler. The assassination plot thus became viable and was put into action. Von Stauffenberg rehearsed his role

tirelessly: activating the bomb with his three remaining fingers was a particular challenge. However, while fate seems to have placed him in this unique position, there was much that went wrong on the day. Retreating to a changing room to activate the explosives, he was interrupted before he could complete the task on both of the two-pound bombs brought to the Wolf's Lair, and only one bomb was activated. Also, when von Stauffenberg left the conference room, one of the generals unknowingly pushed his briefcase further beneath the table, and behind one of the heavy oak beams, which shielded Hitler from the full force of the blast. And of course, the heat of the day



COURT MARTIAL
General Fromm (Tom Wilkinson) was executed in March 1945



PAYBACK TIME

A furious Hitler ordered anyone connected with the plot to be rounded up. The **Gestapo arrested some 7,000** people suspected of ties to the resistance, of whom **almost 5,000 were executed.**

ON LOCATION

Permission was eventually given to **film at the Bendlerblock**, the building where von Stauffenberg was executed.



played its part, as all of the conference room windows had been thrown open. Had the windows been closed, and the blast contained within the room, the impact of the bombs would have been much more severe.

CONFUSION REIGNS

After the explosion, von Stauffenberg fled from the Wolf's Lair. The sound of the blast convinced him that Hitler had been killed, and during his three-hour flight back to Berlin, he believed that Operation Valkyrie would proceed. By the time he arrived at the Reserve Army's offices in Berlin's Bendlerblock, however, rumours had begun to circulate that Hitler had survived. Von Stauffenberg's insistence that Hitler was dead, and that the plan therefore must proceed, was supported by some and opposed by others, and fighting broke out. Ultimately, General Fromm, who had known of the plans, seized

control and, seeking to clear his own name, ordered the immediate execution of von Stauffenberg and three other conspirators. In the early morning of 21 July 1944, they were shot in the courtyard of the Bendlerblock. Von Stauffenberg's possible last words – "Long live our sacred Germany" – testify to his love for his country, which led him to commit the ultimate act of treason under the Nazis, but allows him to be cast as a hero in *Valkyrie*. The film simplifies the man, characterizing him as an action hero rather than a German nationalist leading a military coup. But the story remains a gripping yarn, even as the plot inevitably unravels as it reaches its chaotic and messy ending. 📍



WHAT DO YOU THINK?

How would history have been different had the plot to kill Hitler succeeded?

Email: editor@historyrevealed.com

Ones to watch: Hitler

The Great Dictator

(Charlie Chaplin, 1940)
Chaplin's satirical talkie caused controversy as the US was still at peace with Nazi Germany.

Downfall

(Oliver Hirschbiegel, 2004)
Bruno Ganz portrays Hitler's final days in his bunker in this critically acclaimed German-language movie.

Inglorious Basterds

(Quentin Tarantino, 2009)
Brad Pitt stars in Quentin



Bruno Ganz's harrowing performance as Hitler in *Downfall* is remarkable

Tarantino's gory and historically ridiculous yarn of a plot to assassinate leading Nazis.



VALKYRIE





CLOSE ESCAPE
Adolf Hitler (center) shows Benito
Mussolini (left) the destruction
left by the assassination attempt

GETTY

12 Years A Slave

Mark Glancy explores the extraordinary story behind Hollywood's critical hit, *12 Years a Slave*

Solomon Northup published *12 Years a Slave* – an account of his kidnapping and the ensuing years of captivity when he was forced to live as a slave in the Deep South of the United States – in January 1853. The book's first-hand account of southern brutality astonished readers in the North, and it became an instant bestseller. Now, 161 years later, the story is making a great impact again.

The film adaptation of Northup's memoir has been acclaimed by critics and historians alike for its unflinching portrayal of American slavery. As a major Hollywood success, both financially and in terms of its many awards, *12 Years...* may signal a new willingness in the US to come to terms with this most depraved aspect of the nation's history.

SOLD INTO SLAVERY

The powerful, compelling quality of Northup's saga arises partly from its veracity. Throughout the book, he refers to the many people, places, documents and events that serve to verify his story. It is also compelling because it unfolds like a nightmare, and one in which everything taken for granted in life – liberty, legal rights, the most basic comforts of food and lodging – has suddenly vanished.

For Northup, the nightmare begins in 1841. A 33-year-old African-American living in the state of New York (which had abolished slavery in 1827) he is, and always has been, a free man: educated, modestly prosperous, happily married, and the father of three children. Then, quite by chance, he meets two apparently friendly stage entertainers, later identified as Alexander Merrill and Joseph Russell. They have heard that



SOLOMON IN HIS PLANTATION SUIT.

Northup plays the fiddle and offer him work as a musician, beginning with a stint in Washington DC.

Tempted by their offer of well-paid work, Northup travels with them to the nation's capital, where slavery is legal, and there he is drugged or knocked-out, waking to find himself in chains and at the mercy of slave trader James Birch, who savagely beats him when he insists that he is a free man.

Forcibly transported by ship to New Orleans, Northup is sold to work on a plantation in the remote backwoods of Louisiana. There, over the course of 12 years, he suffers the hardship and inhumanity endured by millions of slaves before and after him.

THE FACTS

Director:

Steve McQueen

Cast:

Chiwetel Ejiofor,
Lupita Nyong'o,
Michael Fassbender,
Sarah Paulson, Brad
Pitt, Benedict
Cumberbatch

“Before I came to you I was a free man...”

LEFT: Solomon Northup as he appears in the original book, published in 1853
MAIN: Unaware of what lies before him Northup dines with his soon-to-be captors before freedom is snatched from him

Like all slaves in the American South, Northup is the captive of his owner, performing back-breaking work picking cotton or cutting sugar cane from sunrise to sunset, six days a week, whipped by overseers if he wearies. He has only the most meagre rations of food. He lives in a shack that has no floor or furnishings, and he sleeps on a plank of wood. He cannot leave the plantation without permission and has to carry a written pass outside of his owner's property. Others who attempt to escape are hunted with hounds and, when caught, killed on the spot without trial or hearing.

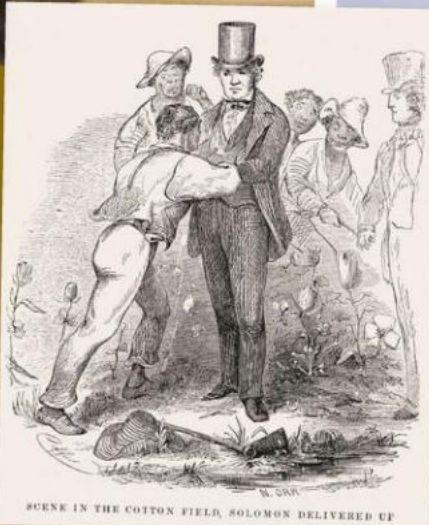
Over the course of his 12 years in captivity, Northup is bought and sold

SLAVE HERITAGE

Solomon's father, Mintus, was himself a **former slave**, working for the Northup family of Rhode Island whose name he took after he was freed

"I don't want to survive, I want to live..."

FAR RIGHT: Northup is put to work in the cotton fields of Louisiana
RIGHT: An illustrated scene from the cotton fields as depicted in Northup's book. The life of a slave involved back-breaking work, often with frequent punishments and meagre rations



FACT VS FICTION

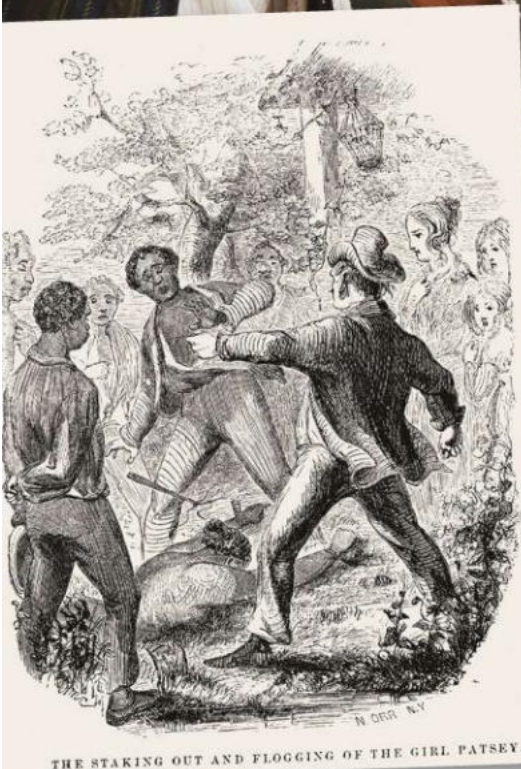
In the film, a sailor on the ship travelling to New Orleans murders one of the slaves. This is not in Northup's account and, given the **high price of slaves**, is unlikely to have occurred





COST OF SURVIVAL

Like many female slaves, Patsey is **forced to become the mistress** of her owner. He frequently rapes and, at the request of his wife, whips her



“I thought I must die beneath the lashes of the accursed brute...”

LEFT: Northup's book depicts the flogging of female slave Patsey
ABOVE: A helpless Northup can only look on as Patsey pleads with her master, Edwin Epps

three times. Slaves are expensive and masters consider them to be a major investment from which they want to reap the highest return. Hence, Northup recognises that he cannot tell his first master, Ford, of his true identity as a free man. Although Northup considers Ford to be kind, he also knows that Ford is too accustomed to slavery to be able to recognise its immorality. It is painfully obvious that Ford will never regard Northup as anything other than his rightful property.

His next two masters, Tibeats and Epps, are viciously cruel. Northup suffers their rages himself and also observes the torments of his fellow slaves. Indeed, for

all of Northup's own agony, the most heartbreaking events in his saga concern his fellow slave Patsey, who is repeatedly raped by Epps and also beaten by his bitterly resentful wife.

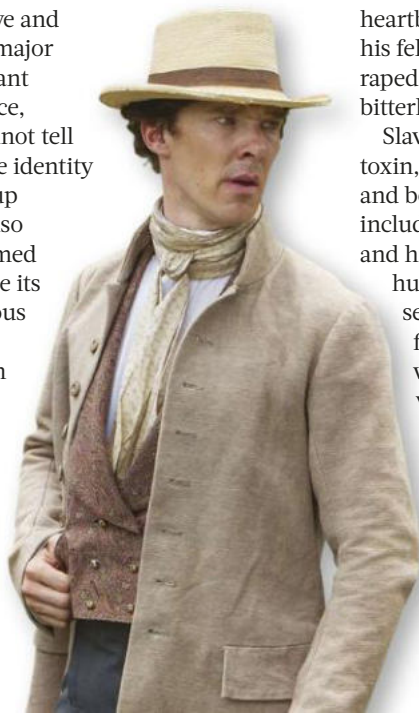
Slavery, in Northup's account, is a toxin, and one that poisons the mind and body of everyone involved in it, including slave owners such as Epps and his wife, who abandon their own humanity in favour of pitiless self-interest. Northup eventually finds his opportunity for freedom when a Canadian labourer, Bass, visits Epps's plantation. Northup confides in him, and Bass agrees

MASTER OF FATE
Benedict Cumberbatch plays Ford, a slave owner deeply ingrained in the traditions of the slave trade

to write and post a letter to Northup's family in the state of New York. There, a state law offers financial aid for those seeking the return of free citizens who have been pressed into slavery.

Northup's family, having learned of his whereabouts at last, is thus able to instigate his return to freedom. The law, in this respect, works effectively on his behalf. Epps is outraged by what he regards as the loss of his property, but he is legally obliged to relinquish Northup who returns home to his family.

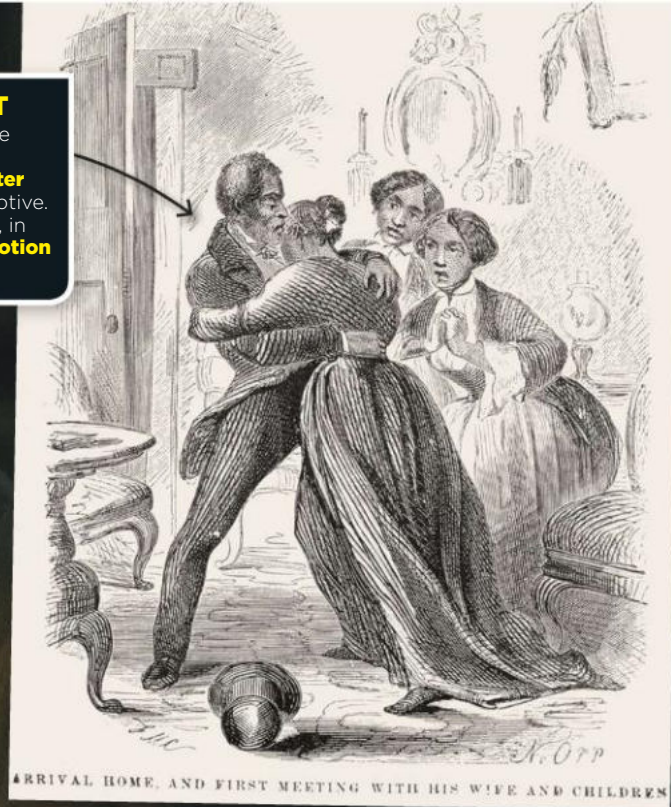
In other respects, however, the law does not work in Northup's favour. Birch, the slave trader, is the first to be tried for kidnapping, but Northup is not allowed to testify against a white man, and the case falls apart in court. Later, when Merrill and Russell are identified and located, the case against them is lost





CHANGING THE PLOT

Northup would no doubt have been appalled by the film's portrayal of a **sexual encounter** between him and another captive. It does not occur in the book, in which he emphasises his **devotion to his wife and family**



ARRIVAL HOME, AND FIRST MEETING WITH HIS WIFE AND CHILDREN

“Upon my liberation I will have satisfaction for this wrong...”

ABOVE: Northup is warmly greeted by his family on his return home in an illustration from his 1853 book
MAIN: Northup, in fearful secrecy, writes a letter that he hopes will gain him freedom

“12 Years a Slave can be seen as a breakthrough film in terms of America’s acceptance”

in a legal wrangle about using New York state law in a prosecution that concerns crimes committed in Washington DC.

LEGACY

Northup returns to his family and, with the help of a co-author, writes his memoir. But his is by no means the only slave memoir published in this era. Abolitionists in the North sought to bring these stories to the public, and in some instances they wrote on behalf of former slaves. Northup’s co-author was David Wilson, an experienced writer who invested the memoir with both a sense of balance and gripping first-person narration that drives the story in a straight line from beginning to end.

These virtues, unfortunately, are not as apparent in the film. Although, by and large, one can scarcely quibble with

the film’s historical accuracy, its plotting lacks the force and focus of the book.

On screen, there is no narrator, and the story occasionally moves back and forth in time. The resulting effect is a sense of detachment from Northup himself. Although Chiwetel Ejiofor gives a mesmerising performance, his Northup largely appears bewildered. The film spends long periods focussing on Northup’s degradation rather than on his astonishing ability to survive his long ordeal and to triumph over his captors, which is the theme that reigns through the memoirs.

While *12 Years a Slave* can be seen as a breakthrough film in terms of America’s acceptance, there is certainly scope to explore this period in history through the eyes of other individuals. The terrible human cost demands detailing. 🟡

Ones to watch: slavery films

Gone with the Wind

(Victor Fleming, 1939)
Although not as aggressively racist as the earlier Civil War epic, *The Birth of a Nation* (DW Griffith, 1915), *Gone with the Wind* still represents slavery as a benevolent social order.

Amistad

(Steven Spielberg, 1997)
A mutiny on board a slave ship bound for Cuba results in a court case in the US, in which the future of the kidnapped Africans is at stake.



Djimon Hounsou plays slave Cinqué in *Amistad*

Django Unchained

(Quentin Tarantino, 2012)
In the ‘pulp fiction’ of slavery films, a former slave seeks to free his wife from a ruthless plantation owner.

The King's Speech

Mark Glancy explores the story behind the hit film, and reveals how the King who struggled to speak finally found his voice...



“The nation believes that when I speak, I speak for them. But I can’t speak.”

LEFT: With coaching from Logue, King George VI delivers a slow, but stutter-free radio address on the day Britain declares war
MAIN: George VI, as played by Colin Firth, prepares for the same broadcast. Logue stands on the other side of the microphone, talking the King through his speech

Films about the British monarchy have long centred on the most charismatic rulers and legendary moments of crisis or triumph during their reign. Henry VIII and Elizabeth I figure prominently in this tradition, and each has been portrayed by a string of fine actors. *The King's Speech*, by contrast, is remarkable for bringing to the screen one of Britain's least imposing monarchs, King George VI, and for dramatising the hitherto little-known problem of his stammer. It is even more remarkable for making this shy, awkward figure a sympathetic and compelling character, and for

illuminating the transformation of the monarchy in the age of mass media.

George VI was born in 1895 as Prince Albert, the second son of the future King George V and Queen Mary. He was known within the Royal family by the nickname 'Bertie', but everything else about his upbringing was stiff with the strict, unsentimental attitudes towards child rearing that prevailed in the Victorian era. He was left-handed but made to write with his right hand. He had 'knock knees' and was forced to wear uncomfortable metal braces on his legs. His stammer was regarded as an affliction that he should somehow rise above. "Get it out!", King George V would demand when he heard his son

struggling to speak. That, of course, only made the condition worse.

SEALED LIPS

In childhood, the stammer was a private issue. It made the young Prince seem quiet, but had no wider significance. He was the second-in-line to the throne after his elder brother, the future Edward VIII. It was only with the rise of radio in the twenties that his stammer became public knowledge, and thus a problem.

By 1925, Albert had become the Duke of York, and he was required to give the closing speech at the British Empire Exhibition. This was delivered not only to the crowds gathered in the massive new Wembley Stadium,

THE FACTS

Director: Tom Hooper
Cast: Colin Firth, Helena Bonham Carter, Geoffrey Rush, Guy Pearce, Michael Gambon, Claire Bloom, Timothy Spall

CURSING KING

Modern audiences may be amused to see Logue encouraging George VI to **loosen up by swearing** in the film, but this would have been considered outrageously vulgar at the time.

CHARACTER ACT

Colin Firth brilliantly conveys George VI's **anxiety and frustration**, but he is a far more forceful and assertive figure than the shy, diminutive King.

POLITICS OF WAR

The film suggests that in the thirties, the Royals were attuned to the **dangers posed by dictators**, but in fact they were strong supporters of appeasement until the outbreak of war.



“I intend to be a very great Queen... to a very great King”

ABOVE: The future King George VI and Queen Elizabeth leave for their honeymoon, in 1923
RIGHT: In the movie, as in real life, Elizabeth is a strong character and a great support to George VI



FROSTY FRIENDSHIP

The film presents Churchill as a **friend and confidante** of the Duke and Duchess of York, but in fact **they were at odds** with each other in the thirties. Their relationship only thawed later on, years into World War II.



“War with Germany will come. And we will need a King who we can all stand behind”

RIGHT: Winston Churchill celebrates victory with the monarchs on 8 May 1945, outside Buckingham Palace
MAIN: Cigar in hand, Timothy Spall epitomises Churchill

but also to millions of radio listeners around the world. A huge audience heard his slow and faltering speech, but few could imagine the humiliation it brought. One listener was convinced he could help. Lionel Logue, an Australian speech therapist, was at Wembley with his family. “He is too old for me to manage a complete cure,” he told his son, “but I could very nearly do it.”

Albert had seen speech therapists before, but to no avail. Logue focussed on relaxing his patient to reduce the anxiety that accompanied his stammer. He assigned daily exercises – tongue-twisters and breathing techniques – and urged

the Duke to think of the stammer not as an irreparable flaw, but as a condition that could be overcome. His methods met with almost instant success. Their first session was in October 1926, and on the Royals’ tour of Australia and New Zealand that began in early 1927, the Duke gave many well-received speeches. He was not cured, but his delivery and anxiety were much improved.

YEAR OF THREE KINGS


In 1936, the Duke’s life changed forever. On 20 January 1936, George V died and Edward VIII became King. Edward’s modern

outlook and charisma made him popular, but he was also reckless, and had little regard for the propriety that was key to his role. He fell in love with a twice-married American divorcée, Mrs Wallis Simpson, and insisted that he should marry her. What’s more, he hoped she could take the title of Queen, or at the very least, Her Royal Highness.

Within a year of his accession, this resulted in a full-scale constitutional crisis. Winston Churchill, a backbench MP in 1936, lobbied on behalf of Edward and Mrs Simpson, and in the process alienated the Duke and Duchess of York, who wanted the King to fulfil his duties and end this unsuitable relationship. Prime Minister Stanley Baldwin was also against the marriage and, along with a variety of officials and authorities, he forced the King to choose between

LOGUE’S HONOUR

The King’s speech therapist became **Lionel Logue CVO, in 1944, for his distinguished personal service to George VI**



“*The King’s Speech* makes the shy, awkward monarch a compelling character”

“I have a right to be heard. I have a voice!”

Before he becomes King or meets Logue, Firth’s Duke of York hesitates during his first, humiliating, radio-broadcast speech

LAI D ON THICK

The Duke’s stammer during the pivotal speech he gave at Wembley was **quite exaggerated** in the movie. Although **slow and full of pauses**, the actual address was not as cluttered with stutters as Firth’s rendition.

the throne and love. Edward VIII abdicated on 11 December 1936. It was a shock to the country and a bitter blow to the Duke of York, who wept on his mother’s shoulder for an hour when he learned he would be King.

From the moment he was crowned, George VI faced a lifetime of public engagements and speeches. Logue remained his coach and comforter. He helped him to prepare his voice and also amended and annotated speeches to make them easier to deliver.

PLOT POINT

The King’s Speech climaxes with a speech delivered on the day war with Germany was declared, 3 September 1939. It suggests that this was a pivotal event, attended by high-ranking officials

including Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain and Churchill, and that it ended with the King’s appearance on the balcony of Buckingham Palace. Actually, the speech was neither so pivotal nor so well-attended, but the scene represents the new duties the King faced, and his ability to rise to the occasion during this national crisis.

During WWII, the rhetoric and allure of national leaders – namely Churchill and Hitler – played an unprecedented role. In truth, George VI never approached their forceful delivery, but Logue’s coaching enabled the King to speak to his subjects with gravitas and authority. This is the essence of the film, which, through beautiful direction and powerful acting, sheds light on one of Britain’s lesser-known but most-dutiful monarchs. 📌

Ones to watch: films about the Royals

The Queen

(Directed by Stephen Frears, 2006) The death of Princess Diana precipitates a crisis for the private and public lives of the Royal family.

Elizabeth

(Directed by Shekhar Kapur, 1998) Elizabeth I establishes her authority and identity in the early years of her reign.

The Private Life of Henry VIII

(Directed by Alexander Korda, 1933) A semi-



Cate Blanchett brings the young monarch to life in *Elizabeth*

comical, bawdy dramatisation of King Henry VIII’s marriages and his struggle to produce an heir.



BLITZ SPIRIT

George VI, Queen Elizabeth and Winston Churchill inspect bomb damage at Buckingham Palace

GETTY



Apollo 13

Jonny Wilkes explains how NASA turned what could have been the worst tragedy in its history into its finest hour

The masterly space drama *Apollo 13* opens on a historic night for NASA and human history: 20 July 1969. Among the millions glued to their televisions to watch Neil Armstrong walk on the Moon was fellow astronaut Jim Lovell (played in the 1995 blockbuster by Tom Hanks).

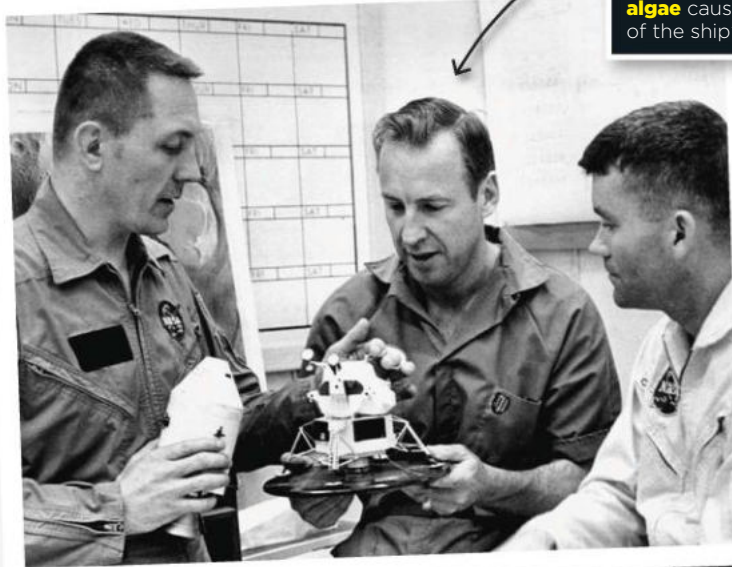
Lovell was Armstrong's backup and had gone into space three times – twice in the Gemini programme, as well as orbiting the Moon with Apollo 8. What happened nearly nine months on from that one small step changed his life and will be remembered as a tale of heroism in the face of overwhelming odds.

UNLUCKY LAUNCH

Apollo 13 is hailed for its accuracy. So cinematic was the real-life mission that when director Ron Howard called for feedback after the premiere, one person said they found the plot implausible, unaware it was based on a real event.

The mission was high on drama from early on. Commander Alan Shepard had been deemed unprepared, so his whole crew was replaced with Fred Haise, Ken Mattingly and Lovell as Commander. Further disruption hit before launch when Mattingly was grounded for fear he had been exposed to German measles, John 'Jack' Swigert taking his place.

NASA scheduled the eight-day flight to launch at 1.13pm, (as an intentional slight to superstitious spectators) on 11 April 1970. Once in space, Apollo 13 comprised a Command Module to house the crew for re-entry, plus a Service Module containing consumables and equipment; together known as Odyssey. This Service Module carried the Lunar Module, named Aquarius. Under the experienced eye of Flight Director Gene Kranz, the first 55 hours were smooth. One console controller in Houston even remarked to Lovell: "The spacecraft is in real good shape as far as we are concerned. We're bored to tears down here". The boredom didn't last. In fact,



FINDING A WAY HOME

In the film, Lovell tells a story of his time in the Navy, based on an actual event. He once got lost over the sea near Japan and his plane's instruments failed but he managed to locate his ship and land safely by following a luminous trail of algae caused by the churning of the ship's propellers.

"Gentlemen, it's been a privilege flying with you"

LEFT: The final line-up for the Apollo 13 mission the day before the launch: Swigert, left, Lovell and Haise. This crew only got their (un)lucky chance when the original commander was deemed unprepared – resulting in the entire first crew being replaced

everyone at Mission Control would barely sleep for the next five days.

The mission was about 200,000 miles and nearly 56 hours from Earth when Swigert stirred the oxygen tanks, a routine procedure requiring just a flick of a switch – but it set off a chain of events that, 93 seconds later, sparked an explosion. Odyssey's control panel lit up with flashing warning lights and Lovell was horrified to see that two fuel cells were lost and an oxygen tank already registered as empty.

MISSION ABORT

It is at this point in *Apollo 13* that Lovell utters the immortal line, "Houston, we have a problem" but that isn't exactly what happened. Swigert was first on the radio, when he said, "Houston, *we've* had a problem". It's still a remarkable understatement but may imply he believed the worst was behind them.

Around 13 minutes after the explosion, Lovell noticed that the stricken Odyssey was venting gas into space. The event had critically damaged the Service Module. Oxygen was leaking and the only way to stop it was to shut the reactant valves

to the fuel cells. Doing this meant abandoning the Moon landing. This was a decision everyone was reluctant to make but, seeing no other option, Kranz aborted the mission – a moment beautifully captured in *Apollo 13* as a despondent Lovell says, "We've lost the Moon". The crew were ordered to power down Odyssey and retreat to its attached Lunar Module Aquarius. Designed to travel from the spacecraft in lunar orbit to the surface of the Moon and back, it now became their lifeboat home.

The immediate task was to determine if there were enough supplies. Aquarius was built for a 45-hour trip with two people but now it had to house three for 90 hours. To conserve power, non-essential equipment was switched off,

THE FACTS

Release date: 1995

Director:

Ron Howard

Cast: Tom Hanks, Kevin Bacon, Bill Paxton, Ed Harris, Gary Sinise, Kathleen Quinlan



“Lovell was horrified to see that two fuel cells were lost and an oxygen tank already registered as empty”

AGE OF AQUARIUS

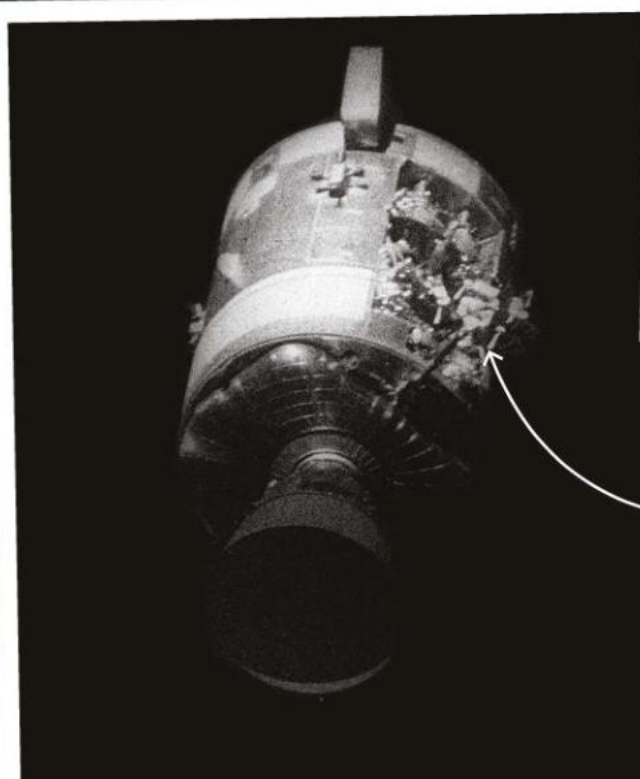
Throughout *Apollo 13*, Fred Haise is shown listening to music on a small cassette player, but they miss out one of the songs he actually took with him – **Age of Aquarius by The 5th Dimension** in honour of their lunar module.

“Houston, we have a problem...”

ABOVE: Actors Tom Hanks (Lovell), Bill Paxton (Haise, right) and Kevin Bacon (Swigert, top) in the Command Module

RIGHT: The true extent of the damage to the Service Module became obvious when the crew watched as it was ejected from the Command Module prior to re-entry: one panel was missing and wreckage was hanging out

FAR RIGHT: In the film, the crew photograph the crippled service module to record the damage for NASA's investigation



CRIPPLED SPACECRAFT

After the mission, an investigation would find that the explosion was caused because **a tiny component of the oxygen tank** wasn't updated to new specifications – over two years before the mission's launch.

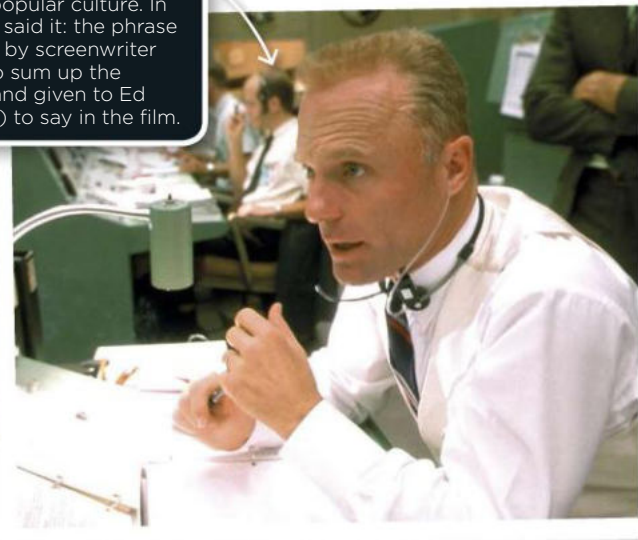


SAY NO TO FAILURE

Kranz is famed for his flat top haircut and the saying **"Failure is not an option"**, which has passed into popular culture. In fact he never said it; the phrase was invented by screenwriter Bill Broyles to sum up the NASA spirit and given to Ed Harris (Kranz) to say in the film.

"We've never lost an American in space, we're sure as hell not gonna lose one on my watch! Failure is not an option"

ABOVE: A tense team of astronauts and flight controllers, part of a team that worked round the clock, monitors the mission as the crew attempt to get home
RIGHT: Ed Harris as Gene Kranz, the NASA flight director who led the team



meaning the module couldn't be heated. As the temperature fell, the crew found it impossible to sleep and food was often inedible as it froze.

On the ground, Kranz decided that instead of heading straight for Earth, they would slingshot the ship around the Moon, building speed without using precious fuel. There were still two problems that needed drastic solutions. First, carbon dioxide was building rapidly in Aquarius – there were plenty of lithium hydroxide canisters to remove it but they were for the crippled Odyssey's square sockets, not Aquarius's circle ones. An ingenious, if hotchpotch, device was constructed using plastic bags, cardboard, tape and the hose from a space suit.

The second problem was re-entering Earth's atmosphere. Odyssey needed power but now could use no more than 12 amps without damaging its systems. According to Flight Controller John Aaron, that was enough to run a coffee

machine. Planning re-entry under these conditions could take three months. Aaron and his engineers had three days. Mattingly (who never developed the measles) assisted in formulating the new start-up procedure, but wasn't the key figure as portrayed in the film. It was Aaron who was the "steely eyed missile man" – one of the highest compliments a NASA employee can receive.

While Mission Control toiled without rest, the world waited for news and Lovell, Haise and Swigert struggled with cold, hunger and dehydration. They cut their daily water intake to 20 per cent, causing Lovell to lose 6kg, and Haise caught a nasty infection. Swigert, while physically holding up, was mentally struggling. He became so paranoid that he would inadvertently jettison Aquarius with the other two inside while he was working in Odyssey,

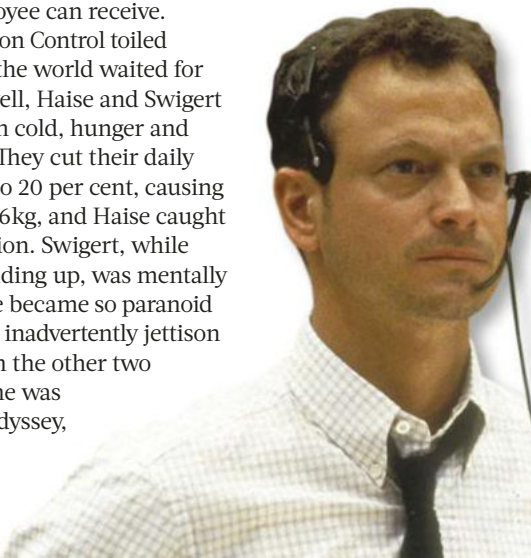
that he taped a note over the relevant switch with 'NO!' written on it.

On the way back, it was necessary to do several engine burns to put them on the right trajectory – only one is shown in *Apollo 13*. The last burn was to ensure the module didn't enter Earth's atmosphere too steeply, which would have meant instant death, or too shallowly, which would have bounced it back into space.

Using Aaron's new procedure, Odyssey was powered up and prepared for re-entry. Aquarius and then the Service Module were jettisoned, giving the crew a chance to see the damage from

LUCKY ESCAPE

Robbed of the chance to go on *Apollo 13*, Ken Mattingly (Gary Sinise) played a role in efforts to save his friends – but was not as central a figure as the film suggests



“From this moment on we are improvising a new mission: How do we get our people home?”

BELOW: A NASA shot inside the Lunar Module, with Swigert (right) rigging up the life support apparatus made necessary when the crew retreated from the Command Module
RIGHT: Lovell's wife Marilyn, with children Jeffrey and Barbara, could only sit and watch as the drama unfolded on television, while friends gathered in support
BELOW RIGHT: The news they'd waited for: the crew splash down safely

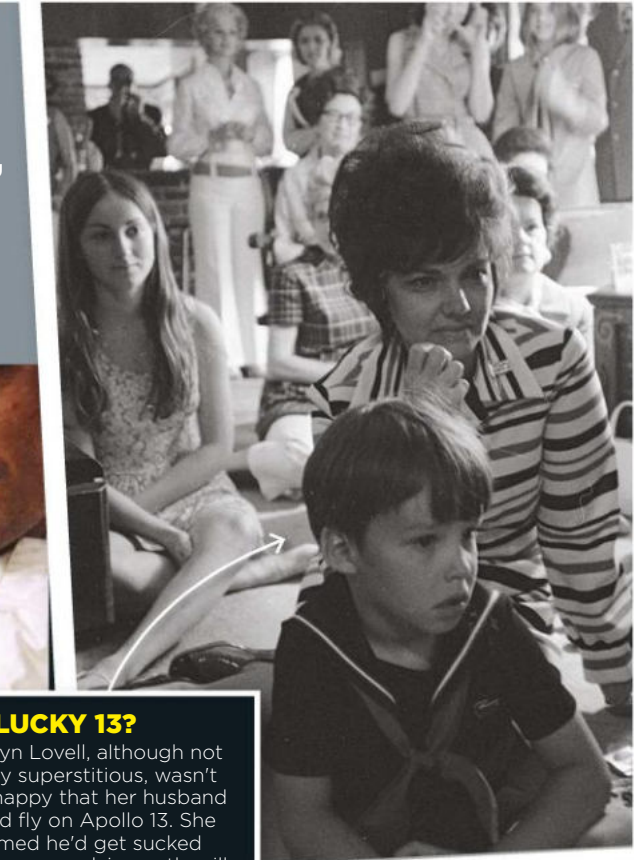


LIFE SAVING FIX

Experts at Mission Control worked for hours to devise this 'mailbox', a fix that the crew rigged up to prevent them dying of carbon dioxide poisoning in the tiny Lunar Module.

UNLUCKY 13?

Marilyn Lovell, although not overly superstitious, wasn't too happy that her husband would fly on Apollo 13. She dreamed he'd get sucked into space and, in another ill omen, she temporarily **lost her wedding ring**. Both incidents feature in the film.



outside for the first time. They took photographs vital to evaluating what caused the explosion. Five days and 22 hours after taking off, Apollo 13 began its return to Earth.

BACK TO EARTH

There was concern the heat shield would crack after going from freezing cold to blistering hot, but it held. There was also concern the condensation would fry the circuits, but, again, the circuits held. There was concern too that the landing site would be in the middle of a typhoon, but the weather held. And there was a concern the parachutes would fail to open properly, but, miraculously, they did open.

A re-entry was normally followed by four minutes of radio silence as the Command Module entered the atmosphere. Apollo 13's blackout lasted an agonising six, while the world waited with bated breath. The mission clock

read 142:54:41 when Apollo 13 finally splashed down in the Pacific Ocean on 17 April, before the bedraggled crew was scooped up by the USS *Iwo Jima*.

Dubbed the 'successful failure', the mission faced innumerable obstacles, every one of which could have led to the deaths of three astronauts. Instead, Lovell, Haise and Swigert returned safely thanks to the tireless work of Kranz and everyone at Mission Control.

Howard's thrilling space odyssey *Apollo 13* is a fitting tribute to a remarkable chapter in humankind's quest to journey into space – no matter the risks – as well as its ability to overcome what seem to be insurmountable problems. 🍷



WHAT DO YOU THINK?

How would the space programme have been different had NASA failed to save the astronauts?

Email: editor@historyrevealed.com

Ones to watch: Apollo programme

Marooned

(John Sturges, 1969)
A gripping tale of three astronauts stranded in space, *Marooned* (right) gave Marilyn Lovell bad dreams before Apollo 13.

The Right Stuff

(Philip Kaufman, 1983)
Ed Harris as one of the Mercury Seven, in the first attempt at manned spaceflight by the US.

For All Mankind

(Al Reinert, 1989)
Jim Lovell helps narrate



The film that gave Lovell's wife Marilyn nightmares

this vivid and powerful documentary, compiled from hours of raw footage taken on every Apollo mission.

HAPPY ENDING

(From left) Jim Lovell, Fred Haise and Jack Swigert show their relief after splashdown from the ill-fated Moon mission





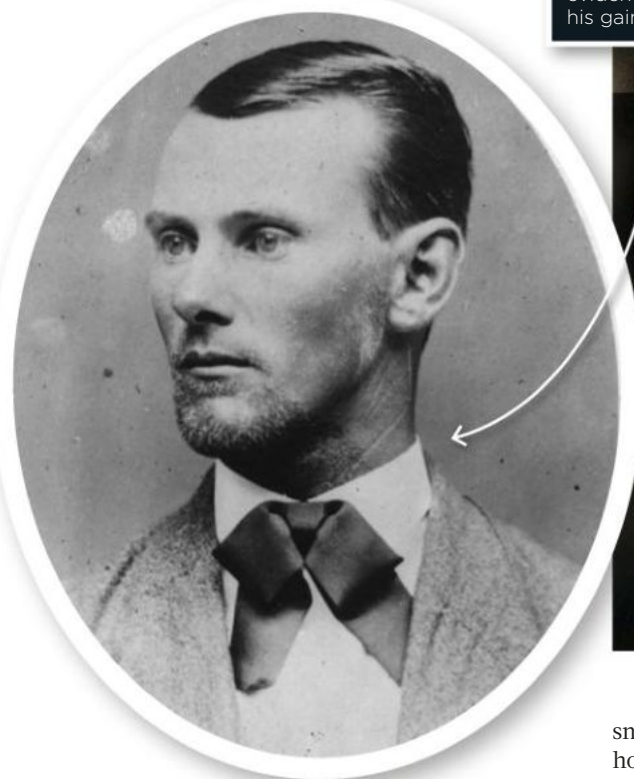
The Assassination of Jesse James

Mark Glancy follows the true life-and-death story of celebrity outlaw Jesse James, comparing it with the Hollywood hit

Jesse James is one of the best known American folk heroes. Celebrated as an outlaw who fought against an overweening government, and who stole from rich corporations for the benefit of poor farmers, his legend has been told in dime novels, ballads and films. Traditionally, Hollywood has been eager to portray him as a chivalrous hero. *The Assassination of Jesse James by the Coward Robert Ford* therefore represents a sharp corrective to the fanciful, romanticized folklore surrounding James. Although the film deals only with the last year of his life, it offers a more accurate and realistic portrait of the outlaw, and one that suggests his entire career was characterized by pitiless violence rather than heroism or chivalry. Indeed, Brad Pitt's Jesse James is so ruthless and menacing that it leads audiences to ponder the circumstances that could produce such a man, and the circumstances that would allow him to be regarded as a hero.

CIVIL WAR STRIFE

Jesse James's banditry had its origins not in the Wild West but in the American Civil War. His family owned a farm in the border state of Missouri, where southern rebels and Union loyalists frequently clashed in the decade before the war. As slave-owners, the James family supported the Confederacy, and were fiercely opposed to the abolition of slavery and the imposition of federal authority. Born in 1847, Jesse was barely a teenager when the Civil War began in 1861. His older brother Frank immediately joined the rebels, fighting at first in the Confederate Army and then with the 'bushwhackers' who led guerrilla raids against Union soldiers,



GIVING TO THE POOR?

Jesse James was seen as the 'Robin Hood of the West', but there is no evidence that he shared his gains with the needy.

"Yeah, just ain't no peace with old Jesse around. You ought to pity my poor wife."

MAIN: Brad Pitt's performance reveals how deeply Jesse James sank into depression in the last year of his life

LEFT: The outlaw enjoyed celebrity status and mass support during his life, despite his deadly criminal actions

attacked government posts, burnt down the homes of loyalist families and, in some cases, murdered the inhabitants. In turn, Union soldiers ruthlessly hunted the rebels, who were often their neighbours. In 1863, a Union militia raided the James farm, seeking to capture Frank, and beat and whipped the defiant, young Jesse.

One year later, Jesse and his brother joined William T 'Bloody Bill' Anderson's bushwhackers. If the 16-year-old Jesse had not been brutalized enough by the war already, riding with this notoriously vicious gang sealed his destiny. In September 1864, Frank and Jesse participated in the infamous raid on Centralia, Missouri, where Anderson led around 80 rebel guerrillas into the

small town and looted shops, robbed homes, and held up a stagecoach. They then blockaded the railway lines and stormed a train when it screeched to a halt. Finding nearly two dozen unarmed Union soldiers on board, the gang forced the men to strip before executing them. Even then, they did not flee, but proceeded to rob the passengers. A Union militia was sent in pursuit, but they suffered equally horrific treatment, as Anderson's guerrillas scalped them and dismembered their bodies.

Such barbarism became second nature to Jesse during the Civil War. By the time the war ended in 1865, he had suffered a near-fatal gunshot wound, but the impact on his mind was far greater. The war would never end for him, and the rest of his life would be spent terrifying, robbing and murdering people. At first, he was a follower rather than a leader in the criminal gangs that raided banks,

THE FACTS

Release date: 2007

Director:

Andrew Dominik

Cast:

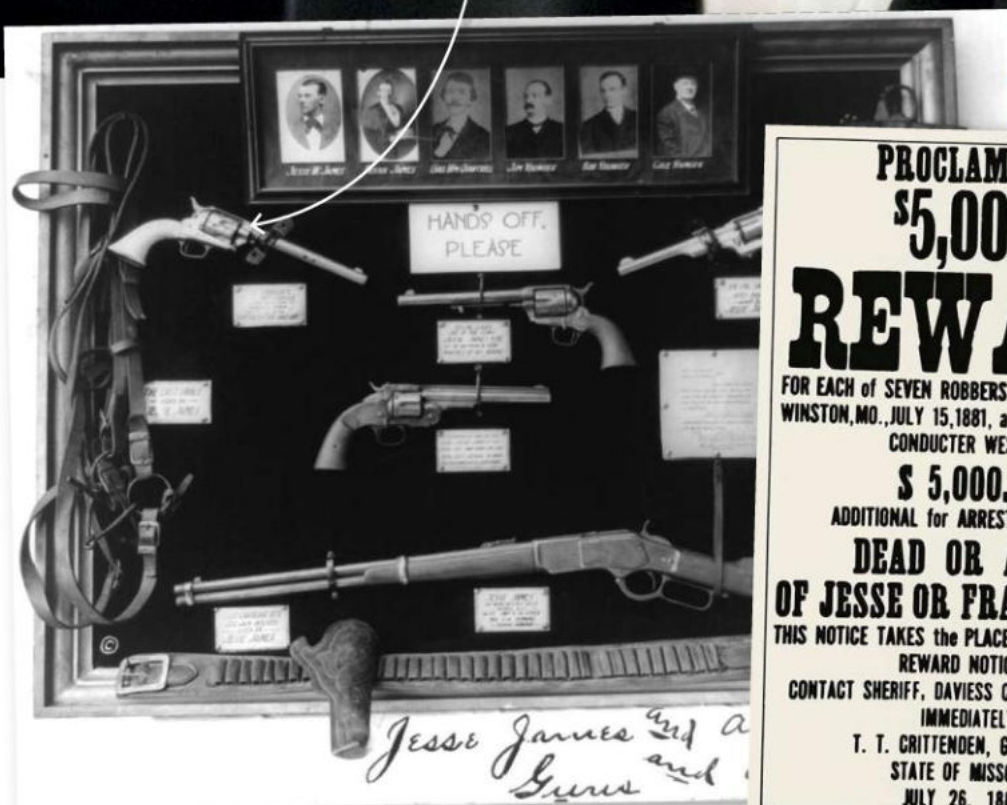
Brad Pitt, Casey Affleck, Mary-Louise Parker, Sam Shepard, Sam Rockwell



SEVEN-FIGURE SHOOTER

The most famous of James's weapons was his **Colt .45 pistol** – in 2013, it was valued at \$1.6 million.

“The film is a tragedy, rather than a paean to the West.”



PROCLAMATION
\$5,000⁰⁰
REWARD
FOR EACH of SEVEN ROBBERS of THE TRAIN at WINSTON, MO., JULY 15, 1881, and THE MURDER of CONDUCTOR WESTFALL
\$ 5,000.00
ADDITIONAL for ARREST or CAPTURE
DEAD OR ALIVE
OF JESSE OR FRANK JAMES
THIS NOTICE TAKES the PLACE of ALL PREVIOUS REWARD NOTICES.
CONTACT SHERIFF, DAVIESS COUNTY, MISSOURI IMMEDIATELY
T. T. CRITTENDEN, GOVERNOR
STATE OF MISSOURI
JULY 26, 1881

“I guess I’ll take my guns off... for fear the neighbours might spy them.”

FAR LEFT: Such was James’s fame that his son, Jesse James Junior, was able to charge people to see his collection of guns, holsters and boots used by his father’s gang.

LEFT: Following a train robbery by Jesse James and his gang in 1881, the Governor or Missouri issued a \$5,000 reward for James, dead or alive. At the time of his death, the bounty on his head was too large for Robert Ford to ignore.

THE ASSASSINATION OF JESSE JAMES

JESSE THE JOKER

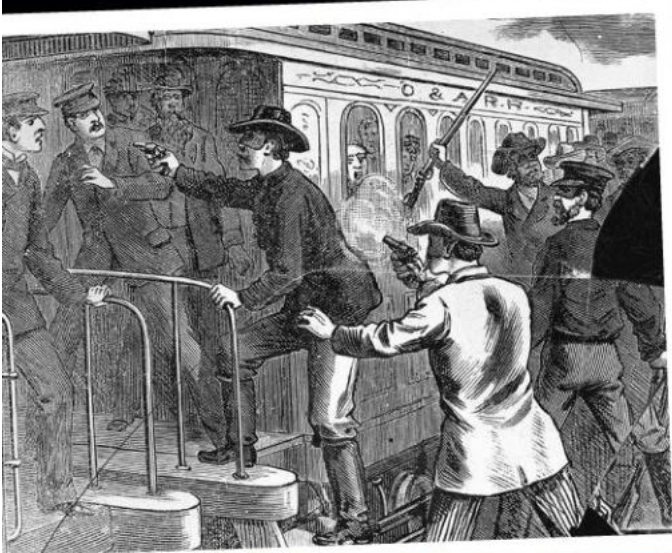
During his final train robbery in September 1881, Jesse put on a charismatic performance, denouncing the railway corporations, **quoting from the Bible**, and taking a bow as he left.

THEATRICAL DEATH

Robert went on tour with his brother Charley in a stage show entitled **'I Killed Jesse James'** – his re-enactments of the shooting were not well received as many criticised his cowardice.

“Whenever a train robbery or a bank cracking operation transpires... the James-Younger boys receive all the censure.”

LEFT: Even though there was no denying their involvement in dozens of robberies, Jesse would write letters to local newspapers, pleading his innocence
MAIN: In an iconic scene from the film, James commits a night-time train robbery



but in 1869, he and Frank held up a bank in Gallatin, Missouri, and Jesse shot the cashier, mistakenly believing him to be the former Union army officer who had killed 'Bloody Bill'. He was mistaken, but his public boasting about taking revenge reached the ears of newspaper editor John Newman Edwards. His newspaper, the *Kansas City Times*, was staunchly opposed to the post-war Reconstruction programme the government imposed on defeated Confederate states, and Jesse was treated as a hero in its pages.

RIGHTEOUS REBEL

For the next 12 years, Jesse was a famous – or, depending on your perspective, an infamous – outlaw, who led many bank, train and stagecoach robberies that routinely involved murder. He would often go on to protest his innocence

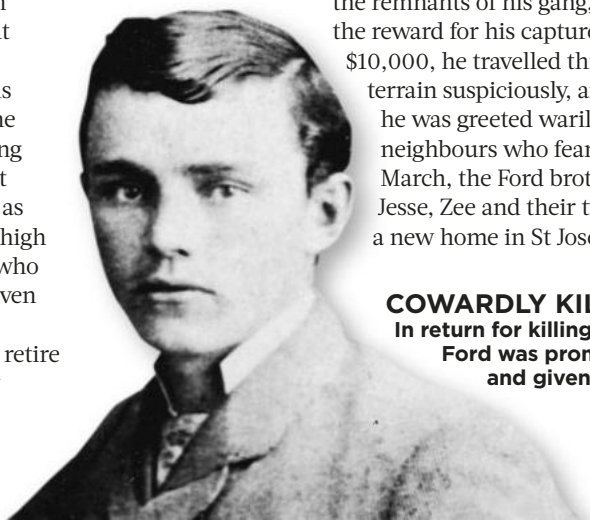
in letters written to newspapers and, in them, he took the opportunity to promote his public image as a righteous rebel. He married his first cousin, Zee Mimms, and had two children, but the family was constantly on the move and in hiding. Frank and Jesse survived a calamitous bank raid in Northfield, Minnesota, in 1876, but the other members of their gang were either killed or captured. This proved to be a turning point for the James brothers as their trusted gang dissolved. Their grassroots support among the defeated rebels waned as Reconstruction foundered. And a high reward was promised for anyone who helped to capture them, making even their allies hard to trust.

By late 1881, Frank was eager to retire from crime, and Jesse sought new

criminal comrades. Among these were Dick Liddil and Charley Ford. Charley lived with his younger brother Robert and their widowed sister Martha in a remote house not far from where Jesse grew up in western Missouri. The Ford home became a hub for Jesse and the remnants of his gang, but with the reward for his capture now set at \$10,000, he travelled this familiar terrain suspiciously, and in turn he was greeted warily by the neighbours who feared him. In March, the Ford brothers joined Jesse, Zee and their two children in a new home in St Joseph, Missouri,

COWARDLY KILLER

In return for killing James, Robert Ford was promised \$10,000 and given a pardon





“He’s just a human being.”

MAIN: Casey Affleck takes aim while Jesse James has his back to him in his haunting depiction of Robert Ford

BELOW: Frank James (second from right) stands in a funeral parlour, over the body of his brother Jesse shortly before the burial

BODY DOUBLE

Rumours soon spread that Jesse had faked his own death, with Robert Ford’s help. The **body was exhumed in 1995** and, thanks to DNA testing, confirmed to be the outlaw’s.



ostensibly so they could scout locations for future bank robberies. But 21-year-old Robert Ford was plotting to collect the reward money on Jesse’s life.

After a week in which Jesse watched the brothers relentlessly, Robert finally found his opportunity. On the morning of 3 April 1882, the Ford brothers were with Jesse in the living room, and he had temporarily removed his own holster and guns so they would not be seen by the neighbours. Oddly, Jesse then climbed on a chair to dust a picture hanging high on a wall. It was then, while Jesse was unarmed and had his back to the Fords, that Robert shot and killed him. The brothers were convicted of murder – they had, after all, conspired to shoot an unarmed man in the back – but the governor of Missouri immediately pardoned them. They went

on to exploit their notoriety by staging a show in which they re-enacted the killing, but a fog of shame and cowardice surrounded them. Charley killed himself in 1884, and Robert was the victim of a revenge attack in 1892, in which he himself was shot in the back.

The story of the last year of Jesse James’ life is told with admirable accuracy in *The Assassination of Jesse James by the Coward Robert Ford*, and both Brad Pitt and Casey Affleck give remarkable, career-defining performances. Perhaps the most remarkable thing about the film, however, is its mournful, haunting tone. It is a tragedy rather than a paean to the West, and one that is all the more powerful for refusing to follow in the footsteps of the more engaging and dynamic portrayals of Jesse James. 📌

Ones to watch: Jesse James

Jesse James

(Henry King, 1939)

Tyrone Power’s Jesse James is a wholesome and righteous hero in this entertaining but largely fictional film.

I Shot Jesse James

(Sam Fuller, 1949)

The ‘coward’ Robert Ford is front and centre in this pacy western that plays fast and loose with facts.

The True Story of Jesse James

(Nicholas Ray, 1957)

A film not quite as



John Ireland stars as Ford in *I Shot Jesse James*

truthful as its title suggests, it does at least acknowledge the impact of the American Civil War on the young outlaw’s development.

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HISTORY
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The Untouchables

Mark Glancy looks at the real story of gangster Al Capone – and his nemesis, crime-fighter Eliot Ness, who inspired the film

The 1987 film *The Untouchables* tells a tense, exciting story about Prohibition in America. When alcohol was made illegal in 1920, many Americans approved of the law. The temperance movement had gathered strength for decades before the 18th Amendment to the US Constitution was passed, firstly by the US Congress in 1917, and then by a wide majority of state legislatures over the next two years. Outlawing the manufacture, transportation and sale of alcohol, the amendment was considered a progressive development and the hallmark of a civilised, virtuous society. Yet, while many Americans were in favour of the law, they did not necessarily intend to stop drinking altogether. Speakeasies, bootleggers and bathtub gin became commonplace and the criminal underworld took over an industry previously run by legitimate, tax-paying businessmen.

SCARFACE

Prohibition was a golden opportunity for criminals and a nightmare for law-enforcement officials – and the personalities and conflicts that emerged from it are legendary. Foremost among these was gangster Al Capone. Born in New York in 1899, Capone was the son of poor Italian immigrants. As a child, he was too unruly to stay in school, and he ran with neighbourhood gangs. As a young adult, he became an underling for organised criminal gangs, working as a nightclub bouncer and a brothel manager. He became known as Scarface



“People are gonna drink! You know that, I know that, we all know that, and all I do is act on that...”

MAIN: The official police mugshot of gangster Al Capone taken 17 June 1931
LEFT: Robert de Niro playing Capone, whose social aspirations included appearances at the opera

after he suffered knife wounds in a fight outside a nightclub, while his time in brothels left him with a case of syphilis that would wreak havoc on his mental and physical health.

His climb to the top of the underworld began in 1919, after he moved to Chicago to work for an older gangster, Johnny Torrio, who operated scores of brothels and gambling dens. He and Capone quickly built a vast criminal enterprise involving breweries and distilleries, a distribution system, bribing the police and other officials, and the brutal intimidation of anyone who stood in their way.


Gangsters profited from Prohibition throughout the USA, but gang warfare was particularly vicious in Chicago. Torrio was nearly killed by a rival gang in 1925 and, after a slow recovery, decided to retire and leave the business

in Capone's hands. Capone, too, was a target of assassins. In 1926, while he dined in a restaurant, eight cars stopped outside and began firing machine guns through the windows, but Capone dived to the floor and managed to evade an estimated 1,000 bullets. The experience led him to seek revenge and he had many of his enemies killed.

His most notorious attack on a rival gang became known as the St Valentine's Day Massacre. On 14 February 1929, Capone's henchmen lured rival gang members to a parking garage. Posing as police, they lined their rivals up against a wall. The victims complied, believing this was a routine police shakedown that would prove harmless, but when the gang had been disarmed, Capone's men sprayed them with machine gun fire, killing seven. Later the same year,

THE FACTS

Release date: 1987
Director: Brian De Palma
Cast: Kevin Costner, Sean Connery, Robert De Niro, Andy Garcia, Patricia Clarkson



**“Capone
dived to the
floor and
managed to
evade an
estimated
1,000 bullets.”**

**HEAVYWEIGHT
ACTING**

Al Capone was less handsome than de Niro – he was also heavier so the actor had to wear **padded clothes**.

ROOFTOP FICTION

Gangster Frank Nitti was a **murderous associate** of Capone. In the film, Ness throws him off a roof but in real life Nitti committed suicide in 1943.



**“Eliot Ness, I want him
dead... I want his house
burned to the ground!”**

LEFT: Actor Billy Drago as Nitti, Capone's 'enforcer' ABOVE: With Capone in jail, Nitti became the gang's front man in 1932.



DRAINING PROFITS

Ness played an important role in **cleaning up Chicago** but it was federal agents investigating Capone's tax affairs that landed the gangster in jail.

"Everybody knows where the booze is... the problem is who wants to cross Capone."

ABOVE: Confiscated illegal beer being poured away during Prohibition America
RIGHT: Al Capone curried favour with the public by supporting causes such as this soup kitchen in Depression-era Chicago



Capone himself killed two of his own men, whom he suspected of betraying him, by luring them to a banquet. In the midst of a formal dinner he bludgeoned them to death with a baseball bat.

By now, Chicago had a reputation as a lawless city. Yet Capone sought the public's favour by giving money to the poor, lavishing huge tips on waiters and making flamboyant appearances at the opera and racetrack. "I am just a businessman giving the people what they want," he told reporters. Many policemen were in his pay and turned a blind eye to his activities, but Capone met a more formidable opponent in Eliot Ness.

Ness was not quite the unblemished hero portrayed in *The Untouchables*, but he was



committed to shattering the power of organised crime in his home town. Born in 1903, Ness had studied criminology before joining the Prohibition Bureau in 1927. This was the federal organisation (part of the US Treasury Department) that enforced laws concerning alcohol, and Ness proved to be a vigorous agent.

He rose rapidly through the ranks and, in the wake of the St Valentine's Day Massacre, he was appointed as the leader of one of two units charged with bringing down Capone. While the other unit investigated Capone's tax affairs, seeking to indict him for tax avoidance, Ness's unit was directed to find and close down

Capone's distilleries, and confiscate stores and shipments of alcohol.

IMMUNE TO BRIBERY

For this highly dangerous work, Ness sought young, single men who were excellent marksmen as well as unquestionably honest. His first unit, of a dozen men, was dubbed the 'Untouchables' by the press because of a self-proclaimed resistance to bribery. Ness revealed that he had been offered a bribe of \$2,000 per week – \$27,900 in today's money – in return for not interfering with Al Capone's business.

The work of these agents could be painstaking and slow, but it also had highly dramatic moments. When Ness found that Capone's warehouses were so heavily fortified that they were almost impenetrable, he had a ten-ton lorry

WORK OF FICTION

Sean Connery's character (the honest policeman Jim Malone) is fictitious



TARNISHED HALO

The film **Ness is an idealised figure**. In life, Ness, although incorruptible, was, especially in later life, a womaniser – **and drinker**.



BOUNCING BABY

Ness takes aim in the film, whose **finest sequence** – a baby carriage bouncing down the steps of Chicago's Union Station in a **gun battle** – is a homage to a scene in Russian classic *Battleship Potemkin* (1925) and has no basis in fact.

“Come on Capone! You wanna fight?”

MAIN: Kevin Costner stars as Ness, the crime fighter whose men couldn't be bribed
ABOVE: the real Eliot Ness (left), in 1940.

adapted into a fortress-storming vehicle capable of smashing open steel doors. The allowed his team a considerable element of surprise.

The gangsters, in turn, made several attempts on Ness's life, but he remained defiant. Once, Ness deliberately enraged Capone by taking his confiscated beer lorries past The Lexington Hotel, where the gangster lived, and phoning him to tell him to look out of the window.

Ness and his agents made Chicago a 'drier' town, undoubtedly obstructing Capone's business and slowing his cash flow. Ultimately, however, the gangster was convicted of tax evasion and, in 1932, he began an 11-year prison sentence, which included time in Alcatraz. Capone's poor health, stemming from drug addiction and untreated syphilis, led to him being paroled in 1939. By that

time, the bootlegging era was over: the 21st Amendment to the Constitution had repealed Prohibition in 1933.

Capone remained infirm until his death from a stroke in 1947. Ness worked in law enforcement for many years and, shortly before his death from a heart attack in 1957, he co-authored a memoir, *The Untouchables*. He did not live to see it published, nor to see the popular TV series of the 1960s or the film of the same name. However the story proved enduringly popular, and ensured that heroes, as well as villains, emerged from Chicago's legendary gangster era. 📍



WHAT DO YOU THINK?

Was America's attempt to ban alcohol in the Prohibition counter productive?

Email: editor@historyrevealed.com

Ones to watch: movies about Capone

Scarface

(Howard Hawks, 1932)
Paul Muni plays the maniacal gangster named Tony Camonte in this thinly veiled portrayal of Capone.

Al Capone

(Richard Wilson, 1959)
Rod Steiger is excellent in the lead role of this generally truthful first biopic of Capone.

Capone

(Steve Carver, 1975)
A more modern, brutal and violent account



Ben Gazzara (centre) as Al Capone in the 1975 film

of the gangster's life, including his declining years, with Ben Gazzara as Capone and Sylvester Stallone as Frank Nitti.

The Madness of King George

Tom Symmons examines the curious case of the monarch's mental illness, and provides a diagnosis of the hit film

During 1788, George III became seriously ill. Stricken at first with stomach pains and nausea, the King began to suffer bouts of mental confusion, and by the end of the year was incapacitated. In an attempt to cure his malady, a brutal regime of remedies and treatment was prescribed – but his condition, diagnosed as madness, triggered a Regency crisis that destabilised the country's economy and spread anxiety among his subjects.

This dramatic episode is the subject of the acclaimed 1994 film, *The Madness of King George*, based on Alan Bennett's stage play. It continued an enduring tradition of monarchy films that have explored the tensions between the private lives and public duties of British kings and queens.

At the time of his breakdown, the King was a popular monarch who was widely admired for his piety and strong family values. In 1761, the year after his succession to the throne, he married Princess Charlotte of Mecklenburg-Strelitz, with whom he would have 15 children. Unusually for a British king, he kept no mistresses but was a man of simple, innocent pleasures. He ate very little meat and insisted on the health benefits of fresh air. The King's love of agriculture and the countryside earned him the affectionate nickname 'Farmer George' among his subjects.

The same things couldn't be said for his eldest son and heir apparent, the Prince of Wales, who was unpopular with the public. He led an extravagant lifestyle, and was frivolous with money and women. The Prince was heavily in debt and had risked disinheritance by secretly marrying the widowed Maria Fitzherbert – she was Catholic, which, by law, excluded

him from succeeding to the throne. He was considered dissolute and lazy by his father, and their relationship was stormy and strained.

THE ROYAL WEE

In autumn 1788, the mystery illness that had begun to afflict the King earlier that year worsened. He suffered severe stomach pain and cramps, his urine was discoloured and he became increasingly agitated and confused. He would rave for hours on end and, uncharacteristically, use obscene language. On one occasion in early November, the King, reportedly foaming at the mouth and with bloodshot eyes, physically attacked the Prince of Wales, attempting to smash his head against a wall.

Stories of his illness spread, causing worry among his subjects. One rumour,



"I have known stranger things. I once saw a sheep with five legs."

MAIN: King George dashes around the castle in his nightgown during his illness

LEFT: George was only 22 when he became King of Great Britain and Ireland in 1760

since proven false, claimed that the monarch had mistaken a tree for the King of Prussia. The uncertainty surrounding the future of the King's government – one that had hitherto presided over a healthy and stable economy – caused the stock market to fall sharply.

Meanwhile, a series of harsh and primitive 'remedies' were employed in attempts to cure the King. Poultices of Spanish fly (a poisonous chemical produced by blister beetles) and mustard were placed all over his body; the resulting painful blistering would, it was believed, purge him of 'evil humours'. Laudanum and quinine were among the medicines prescribed. All proved useless.

With the King incapacitated, the Prince took over the running of the royal household and appointed Dr Warren, a general practitioner, to examine his father. Unable to explain the King's illness, the doctor pronounced him insane and delivered the grim prognosis that his condition was incurable.

THE FACTS

Release date: 1994

Director:

Nicholas Hytner

Cast:

Nigel Hawthorne, Helen Mirren, Rupert Everett, Ian Holm, Amanda Donohoe, Rupert Graves

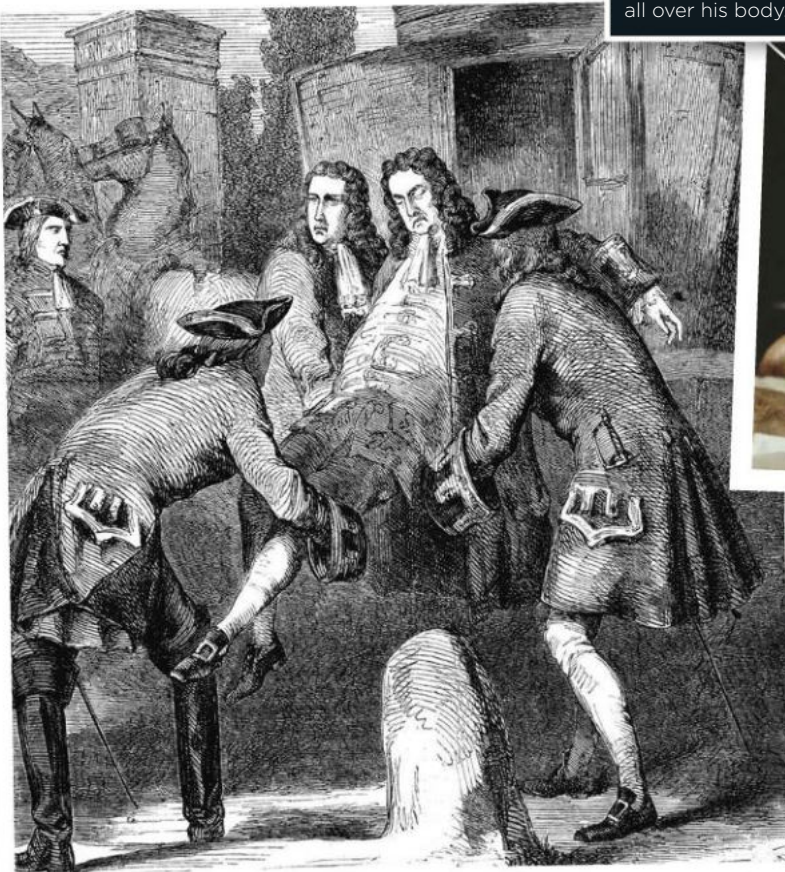
RUNNING IN THE FAMILY

The King suffered several bouts of his illness – believed by some to have been the **genetic condition porphyria** – before it became permanent in 1810.

“This is a witty, poignant and accurate account of the Regency crisis.”

A ROYAL PAIN

Doctors tried to burn away the King's illness by placing **red-hot bowls** and **poultices of mustard** all over his body.



“I’ve had no peace of mind since we lost America. Forests, old as the world itself. A paradise, lost.”

ABOVE: The primitive ‘treatments’ in the film are accurate depictions of some of the ‘remedies’ employed by Dr Willis
LEFT: The King’s illness included many different symptoms, including coloured urine and ‘apoplectic fits’

THE MADNESS OF KING GEORGE

TOUGH LOVE

The King was **gagged and restrained** in an iron chair for hours at a time during his treatment.

QUACK SHOT

George III's illness resolved itself and was **not cured by Dr Willis's brutal treatment**, as the film implies.

"I tell, I am not *told*. I am the *verb*, sir, not the *object*."

ABOVE: The King is force-fed while strapped in a chair. The film shows Dr Francis Willis treating George III with no more deference than any of his other patients
RIGHT: Willis was assisted in treating the King by his son, John, who also attended George when he became ill again in 1801



Unconvinced, Queen Charlotte insisted that specialist physician Dr Willis treat the King. An ex-minister, Willis ran his own private asylum and had experience treating the insane. Dismissing Warren's prognosis, Willis claimed that the King could be cured – on condition that the monarch agreed to the doctor's strict treatment system and, dispensing with royal deference, submit to his absolute authority.

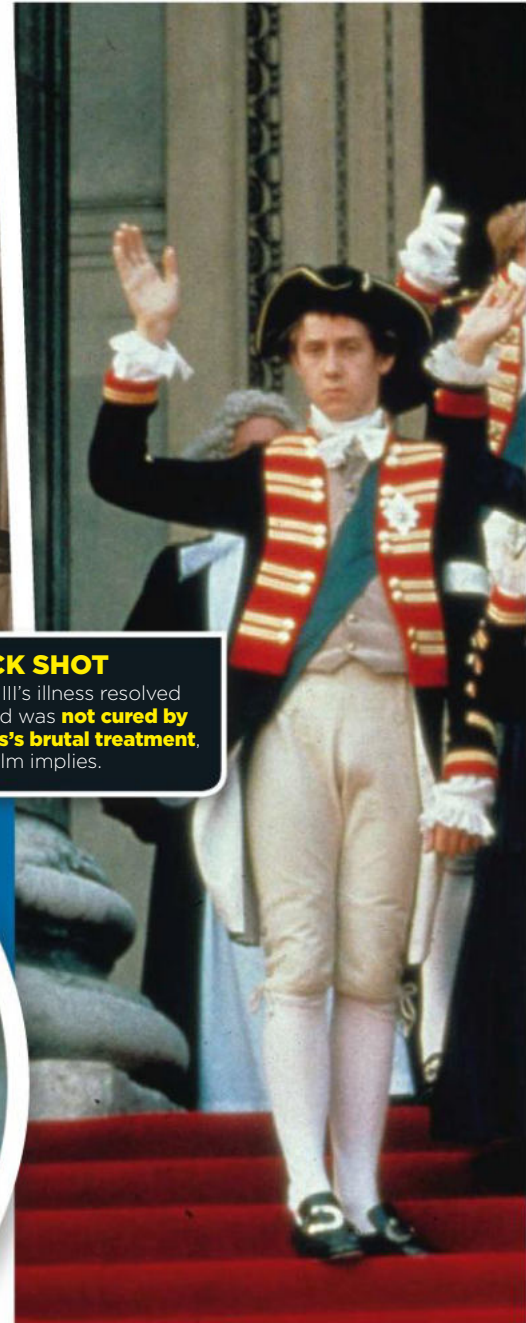
This caused the King further loss of dignity and a great deal more suffering. He was denied permission to see his wife and daughters, and moved from Windsor to the relative privacy of Kew, where he was treated by Willis and his helpers. There, his wild outbursts and bizarre behaviour were curbed through restraint, often for hours, with a gag, straitjacket and purpose-made iron chair. Strong discipline, the doctor asserted, would restore the King's sanity.

PARLIAMENTARY CRISIS

While Dr Willis treated the King, during the winter of 1788–89, an epic parliamentary struggle ensued. With the monarch seriously ill and unable to carry out his royal duties, parliament's powers were severely limited and the future of the government remained in the balance.

The Regency Crisis was a struggle for power between the government and the opposition. Prime Minister William Pitt the Younger was supported by the King. His arch adversary, Charles James Fox, a leader of the opposition Whigs, was the friend and ally of the Prince of Wales, who was to be installed as regent. Given the severity of the King's condition, both Pitt and Fox agreed that a regency was needed but disagreed over the extent of the Regent's authority. If full powers were granted, Pitt feared his days in government would be numbered.

Insisting that the King was incurable, Fox pushed for full powers – royal prerogative – for the Prince, which would surely bring the Whigs into government after five years in opposition. Pitt, anxious to protect his position and in the hope the monarch would recover, employed stalling tactics. Eventually conceding that the Prince was the only reasonable candidate for Regent, the Prime Minister proposed limited royal powers that would give parliament



control over the Regent and prevent him from dismissing the government.

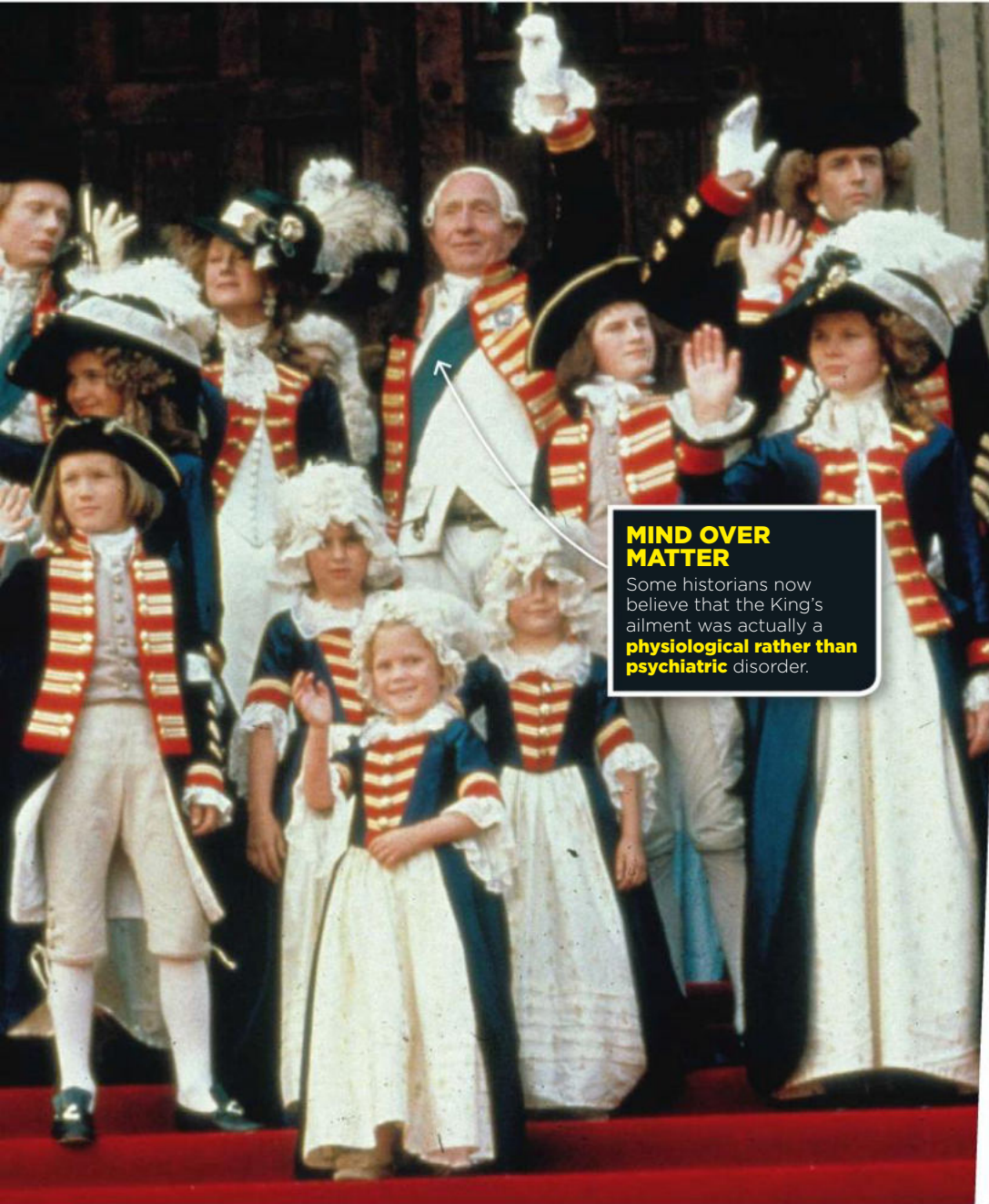
Meanwhile, the King still ailed. Rival diagnoses were hurled between Doctors Willis and Warren, who were summoned to speak before a parliamentary committee, dragging the debate out even longer. Infighting broke out among the Whig opposition over the advocacy of royal prerogative, a position they had been attacking for years.

Then, as disunity within his party's ranks began to weaken Fox's position, the King began to show some signs of recovery. For periods, he was able to speak clearly and rationally, though some incidents – such as when he chased the second keeper of the robes, Fanny

RASCAL REGENT

The Prince of Wales (Rupert Everett) schemed to become regent





MIND OVER MATTER

Some historians now believe that the King's ailment was actually a **physiological rather than psychiatric** disorder.

“No life is without its regrets, yet none is without its consolations.”

MAIN: King George III and Queen Charlotte (Helen Mirren) produced a big family – they had 15 children
BELOW: Though King George met his bride, Charlotte of Mecklenburg-Strelitz, for the first time on their wedding day, theirs was a happy marriage



Burney – showed that his condition remained unstable.

In February 1789, the Regency Bill was passed in the Commons, depriving the Prince of full powers, and was ready to go to the Lords. If it had been thrown out, Pitt's political future would again have been in jeopardy. But it never got there because by the end of the month, George III had made a full recovery.

The film is a witty, stylish, poignant and largely accurate account of the Regency crisis. In the feel-good tradition of mainstream filmmaking it ends on a triumphant note – George III's return to the throne – neglecting to complete the story for the viewer. The reality is that, just a few years later, the condition from which the King suffered in 1788 finally became permanent.

The long reign of George III came to an end in 1810 when he suffered a total relapse. The Prince was appointed Regent, and the King lived out the remaining ten years of his life at Windsor

Castle in a pitiable state – confused, neglected and unkempt. In January 1820, he slipped into a coma from which he would not recover.

Some studies of the King's symptoms have suggested that he suffered from porphyria, a condition that causes skin rashes, stomach pain and mental disorientation. Coloured urine, as produced by the King, is a key symptom of this rare metabolic disorder. If porphyria was the cause of George's madness, it was probably triggered by the accumulation of arsenic in his body. There were extremely toxic levels of the chemical element in the monarch's wig and skin cream, as well as significant traces in medicine prescribed to remedy his condition – but which, instead, prolonged it. ☹



WHAT DO YOU THINK?

What do films such as *The Madness of King George* tell us about our monarchy and government?

Email: editor@historyrevealed.com

Ones to watch: British monarchs

Mrs Brown

(John Madden, 1997)
Mourning the loss of her husband, Queen Victoria (Judi Dench) develops a close relationship with her servant (Billy Connolly).

Elizabeth

(Shekhar Kapur, 1998)
Cate Blanchett is imperious as Elizabeth I, ruthlessly suppressing threats to her rule as the 'Virgin Queen'.

The King's Speech

(Tom Hooper, 2010)
Unorthodox therapist



Judi Dench is by turns haughty and vulnerable as Victoria in *Mrs Brown*

Lionel Logue (Geoffrey Rush) helps King George VI (Colin Firth) overcome his speech impediment.

Schindler's List

Mark Glancy looks at the real characters and tragic events that inspired Steven Spielberg to create his heart-wrenching epic movie

Steven Spielberg made the name Oskar Schindler famous all over the world with his remarkable film, telling the story of a flawed hero who saved 1,000

Polish Jews from the Nazis. It is, of course, only partly about Schindler. Shot mainly in black and white, using hand-held cameras, the film is also a quasi-documentary about the Holocaust. So how much of the action was true?

Even Oskar Schindler's admirers had to admit that he was – at least in part – something of a scoundrel. He was a heavy drinker, a gambler and a womaniser. At the outset of World War II in 1939, he was also a member of the Nazi Party, and he looked forward to the career opportunities that the war would offer him. Yet, when confronted with the brutal realities of the Nazi ideology, Schindler became committed to helping the Jews. By the end of the war, he had worked tirelessly, spent his fortune and risked his own life towards this end, and he had saved at least 1,000 Jews from death in Nazi concentration camps. He became one of the best known and perhaps the most remarkable of the Righteous Among the Nations – those honoured by Israel for having taken an active role in rescuing Jews from execution by the Nazis.

WORKING FOR NAZIS

This unlikely hero was born in 1908 in the predominantly German-speaking city of Zwittau (Svitavy) in Moravia, which became Czechoslovakia in 1918 and is now part of the Czech Republic. His family was Catholic and considered themselves to be ethnically German. Schindler grew up to be a dapper, flamboyant man who enjoyed luxury. Surprisingly, when he was just 20 years old, he married a quiet young woman, Emilie. Unsurprisingly, he spent her dowry on a sports car. In the early years of their marriage, Emilie remained



AN UNLIKELY HERO

Before the war, Schindler was a **member of the Nazi party**. He went to Poland to take advantage of the new laws taking businesses from Jews.

“Let me understand. They put up the money, I do all the work, what, if you don’t mind my asking would you do?”

MAIN: Ben Kingsley and Liam Neeson recreate Schindler and Stern's long friendship
LEFT: Schindler spent his fortune defending his workers

at home in the evenings while Oskar pursued other women. One of his affairs resulted in two children born out of wedlock. He was arrested on drunk and disorderly charges at least twice, and went through a number of jobs, none of which seemed to suit him. Then, in 1936, he took up well-paid work with the German intelligence-gathering organisation, the Abwehr, which would be involved in planning for Germany's invasion of Poland.

When German troops invaded Poland in September 1939, Schindler followed them and settled in the city of Krakow. There, he benefitted from newly imposed Nazi laws that required Jewish homes and businesses to be confiscated. Within a few months, he had acquired an elegant top-floor flat, with views over the city, where he lived with a succession of mistresses while Emilie remained across the border in Czechoslovakia.

He also acquired a bankrupt enamel factory, Emalia, using his connections with Nazi officials to acquire contracts

to make kitchenware for the German military. A Jewish accountant, Itzhak Stern, advised Schindler on the purchase of the factory. Stern also advised him that he could cut his costs by hiring Jews as workers. Schindler took this advice, and soon there were 1,000 Jews among Emalia's 1,750 workers.

Itzhak Stern later recalled that, from their earliest meetings, Schindler seemed unlike other Nazis. He never demonstrated anti-Semitic feelings, and on their second meeting he warned Stern of an upcoming Nazi raid on Jewish homes.

IN THE GHETTO

Over the next few years it was notable that Schindler treated his Jewish workers with relative generosity, giving them better rations and medicines than the Nazis allowed. He bribed SS and Gestapo officials to turn a blind eye to his kindnesses. And, in March 1943, when

THE FACTS

Release date: 1993

Director:

Steven Spielberg

Cast:

Liam Neeson, Ben Kingsley, Ralph Fiennes, Caroline Goodall



PRIVILEGED LIFE

Schindler was born an ethnic-German Catholic and had a **privileged upbringing**. He grew up to be a dapper and flamboyant character.

KL Grp B - Rosen - AL Brunalite / Wkfl.-Liste (Männer) 10.4.45-Blatt 7

Lfd. Nr.	H.Nr.	H.Nr.	Name und Vorname	Geburtsdatum	Beruf
361	69200	9	Hahn David	20.10.97	Werkzeugschlosser
362	"	9	Immerglück Symeon	13.6.24	Stanser
363	"	10	Katz Isaac Josef	5.12.08	Klempnerhilfe
364	"	1	Wiener Samuel	11.5.97	Tischlerhilfe
365	"	2	Rosner "Joseph"	26.6.08	Malier
366	"	3	Gewilch Jakob	22.9.97	Photografmeister
367	"	4	Korn Edmund	7.4.12	Kettalarbeiter
368	"	5	Fischer Jonas	2.2.15	Stanser
369	"	6	Wachtel Roman	5.11.05	Industriediamanten
370	"	7	Immerglück Mendel	24.9.05	Elektroingenieur
371	"	8	Wichter Isidor	25.7.06	Stanser
372	"	9	Landochart Aron	7.1.09	Stanser
373	69220	1	Wandermann Markus	14.9.06	Schreibkraft
374	"	2	Rosenthal Isidor	24.10.09	Ang.-Metallverarbeiter
375	"	3	Silberbachschlag ersch	7.4.12	Wasserinst.Gehilfe
376	"	4	Liban Jan	29.4.04	Zimmerer
377	"	5	Kohane Chiel	15.9.25	Ang.-Metallverarbeiter
378	"	6	Schneiders David	6.9.09	Schlossergeselle
379	"	7	Kupferberg Israel	4.9.98	Lockerer Geselle
380	"	8	Buchführer Norbert	12.6.22	Schreiftaschner etc
381	"	9	Horowitz Schachna	5.1.08	Steinbruchhauer
382	"	1	Sagel Richard	9.11.23	
383	69230	2	Jankowski David	15.4.26	ang.-
384	"	3	Sommer Josef	21.12.14	ang.-
385	"	4	Scholar Raymond	15.4.04	Auto
386	"	5	Scholar Raymond	30.5.21	Star
387	"	6	Selawski Chaim	16.5.24	Star
388	"	7	Kleinberg Michael	1.4.20	Star
389	"	8	Wiedmann Michael	5.11.16	Star
390	"	9	Willschlag Bernhard	24.12.15	Star
391	"	1	Kleinberg Michael	2.11.11	Star
392	"	2	Jankowski Chaim	10.1.13	Star
393	69240	3	Doob Israel	25.1.08	Star
394	"	4	Kleinberg Abram	1.11.15	Star
395	"	5	Wieniak Abram	30	Star
396	"	6	Schreiber Leopold	15.10.29	Star
397	"	7	Silberstein Jacob	1.1.00	Star
398	"	8	Ridner Pinkus	20.12.14	Star
399	"	9	Goldberg Jerlach	17.5.13	Star
400	"	1	Feiner Josef	16.5.15	Star
401	"	2	Feiner Wilhelm	21.10.17	Star
402	69250	3	Low Isidor	28.6.97	Star
403	"	4	Low Isidor	3.3.08	Star
404	"	5	Pozniak Saloma	15.3.09	Star
405	"	6	Ratz Wolf	28.6.09	Star
406	"	7	Levitsky Ferdinand	12.3.09	Star
407	"	8	Lax Ryszard	2.7.24	Star
408	"	9	Semmel David	25.9.95	Star
409	"	1	Horowitz Isidor	2.2.16	Star
410	"	2	Weissel Saloma	15.1.05	Star
411	"	3	Koromann Abraham	19.12.95	Star
412	"	4	Joachimsmann Abraham	9.4.17	Star
413	69260	5	Uwinski Samuel	14.9.27	Star
414	"	6	Rosner Wilhelm	23.7.01	Star
415	"	7	Hirschberg Symon	10.1.11	Star
416	"	8	Goldberg Gerhard	16.10.12	Star
417	"	9	Gerstner Leib	10.7.	Star
418	"	1	Rudek Artali	5.10.7.	Star
419	"	2	Pufelau Naureyoy	5.10.7.	Star
420	"	3	Wulkan Markus	5.10.7.	Star



SCHINDLER'S LISTS?

There was not one 'Schindler's List' but several. The **lists were amended** and repeatedly redrafted, as circumstances changed in 1944 and 1945.

Schindler's desk and office at the Oskar Schindler's Factory Museum in Krakow

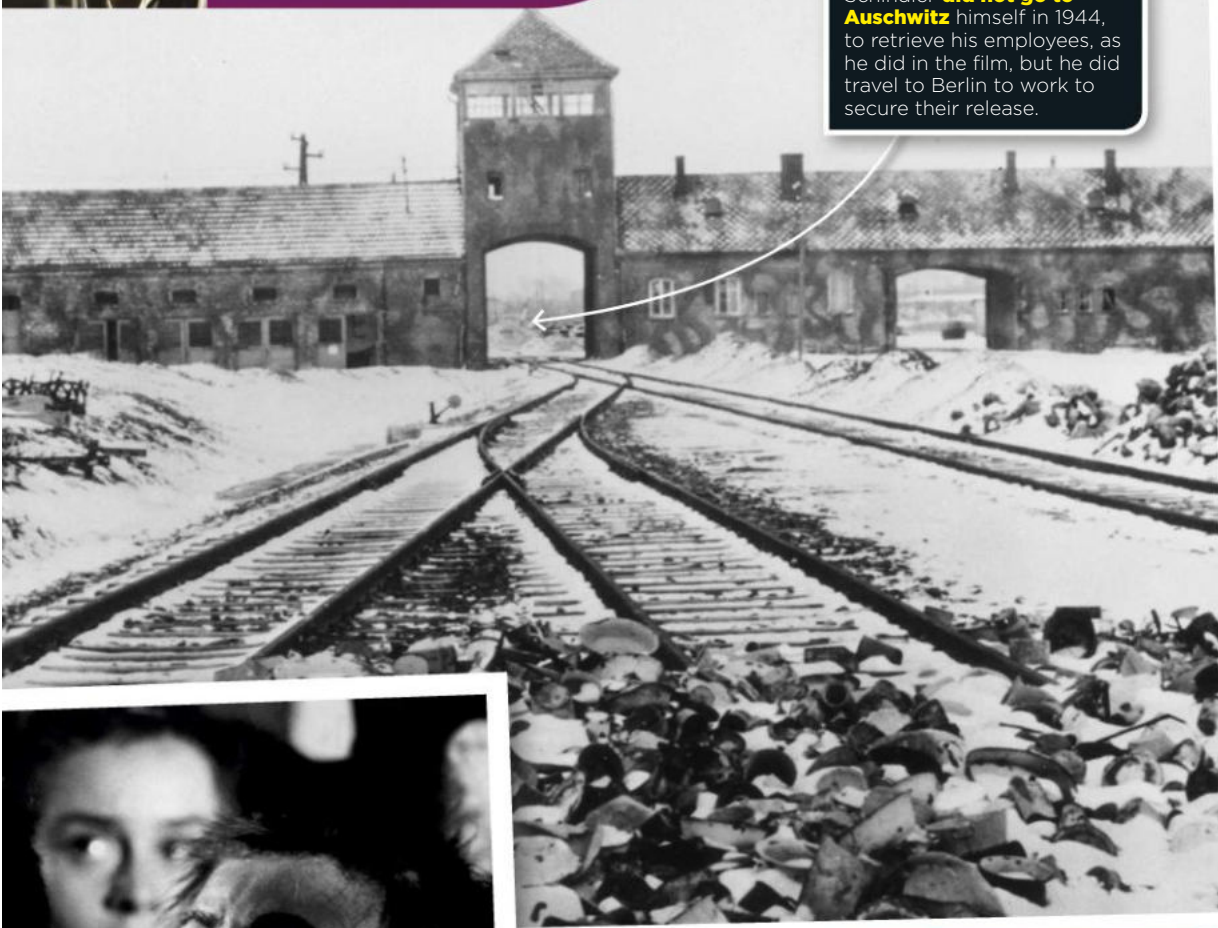
"There will be generations because of what you did"

ABOVE LEFT: The names were compiled by different people, including a corrupt official who accepted bribes from people seeking a place ABOVE RIGHT: Holocaust ID card of Polish Jew Cyria Rosenzweig, one of those saved by Schindler



LET MY PEOPLE GO

Schindler **did not go to Auschwitz** himself in 1944, to retrieve his employees, as he did in the film, but he did travel to Berlin to work to secure their release.



“What are you doing? They’re skilled munitions workers. They should be on my train”

ABOVE: Personal effects of people deported to Auschwitz litter the track at the chilling entrance, and are disappearing beneath the snow

LEFT: In one of the most harrowing scenes in the film, Schindler’s female workers are herded into a room, not knowing if the showers will dispense water or gas



building for those in hiding, and executing hundreds of people on the spot, including the elderly, the ill and many young children. The scale and murderous cruelty of the ghetto clearance shocked Schindler. In the aftermath, his efforts to protect his Jewish workers intensified.

KEEP ENEMIES CLOSE

Schindler used his connections and wealth to ensure that his workers would not be sent to Plaszow, but would instead live in a makeshift camp near the Emalia factory. This would keep them safe from the commandant of Plaszow, Amon Goeth, who shot at prisoners on a whim, or had them attacked by his vicious dogs. Remarkably, Schindler befriended Goeth in

order to protect his Jewish workers, and the two drank together. If Goeth suspected Schindler was overly lenient with his Jewish workers, his misgivings were alleviated by generous bribes.

By mid-1944, the Nazis were eager to close any factories not engaged in vital war work. If this included Emalia, Schindler’s workers could be sent to

Auschwitz. But Schindler persuaded officials in Berlin to allow him to build armaments, and to move his factory to Brännlitz (Brněnec) back in Czechoslovakia.

When the idea was approved, the first of Schindler’s lists contained the names of the



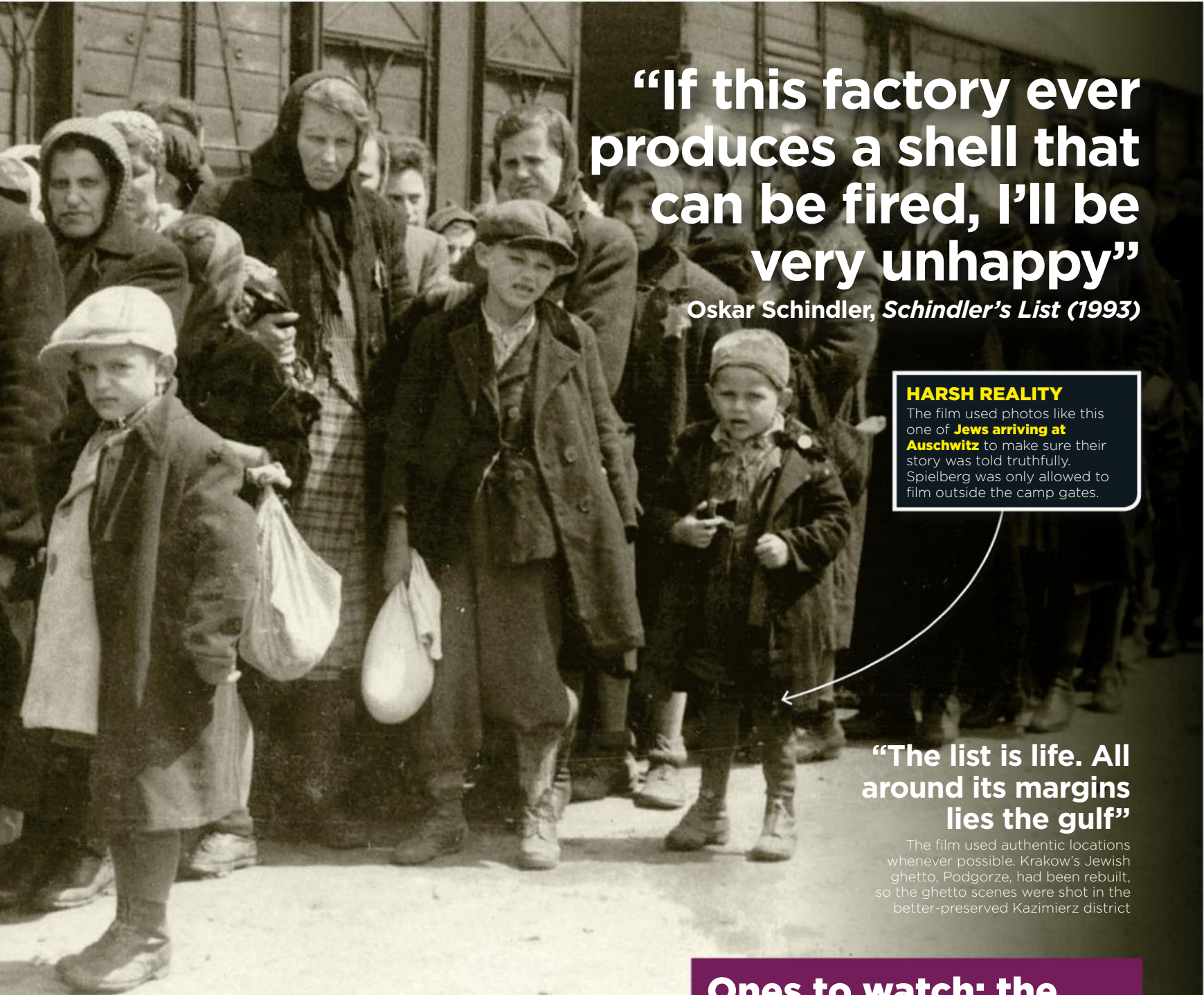
PORTRAIT OF EVIL

Ralph Fiennes brought the camp commandant Amon Goeth to life

< Schindler heard that Krakow’s Jewish ghetto was to be violently cleared by the SS, he warned his workers in advance about the raid and urged them to stay in the factory overnight.

The Nazis had already reduced the Jewish population of Krakow from 70,000 to 7,000, and they forced the remaining Jews into an overcrowded, walled ghetto, where four families might be required to share a single flat. But now it was decided to clear the ghetto, sending those who could work to the brutal Plaszow labour camp and those who could not work to be killed at the Auschwitz concentration camp. On 13 March 1943, the SS raided the Jewish ghetto, searching every

ALAMY X1, GETTY X2, REX/SHUTTERSTOCK X1, MOVIE STILL X1



“If this factory ever produces a shell that can be fired, I’ll be very unhappy”

Oskar Schindler, *Schindler’s List* (1993)

HARSH REALITY

The film used photos like this one of **Jews arriving at Auschwitz** to make sure their story was told truthfully. Spielberg was only allowed to film outside the camp gates.

“The list is life. All around its margins lies the gulf”

The film used authentic locations whenever possible. Krakow’s Jewish ghetto, Podgorze, had been rebuilt, so the ghetto scenes were shot in the better-preserved Kazimierz district

workers authorised for transportation to the new camp. Yet the 700 men on the list were mistakenly sent to Gross-Rosen concentration camp and the 300 women to Auschwitz. It took weeks, and further bribes, to retrieve the workers, but they were saved from near-certain death.

At Brünnlitz, and now reunited with Emilie, Schindler continued to spend his fortune buying black market food and medicines, and bribing officials who might have questioned why the factory produced so few effective armaments. On 9 May 1945 (the day after VE Day), Oskar and Emilie fled, with the good wishes of the workers, intent on surrendering to the Americans rather than the Russians.

The workers presented Oskar with a ring on his departure, inscribed with a saying from the Talmud: “He who saves

a single life saves the entire world”. In the latter part of the war especially, Oskar and Emilie had saved many lives, yet in the post-war period it was Oskar who needed to be saved. As a former Nazi, a spy for the Abwehr, and a man who ran a forced labour camp, he could have been prosecuted for war crimes. Yet the surviving ‘Schindler Jews’, as they became known, protected him, and ensured that his achievements became known. They also frequently saved him from hard times, with loans and gifts of money when his various business ventures failed. He died in 1974 of heart failure and was buried in Jerusalem.

In real life, and on screen, Schindler was a complex character, but the events surrounding him are represented in *Schindler’s List* with a power and impact that few could ever forget. 🕯

Ones to watch: the Holocaust

The Diary of Anne Frank

(George Stevens, 1959)

The story as told through the diary of teenage Anne while hiding from the Nazis with her family in occupied Amsterdam.

The Pianist

(Roman Polanski, 2002)

The unrelenting true story of Polish composer Wladyslaw Szpilman surviving in Warsaw.

The Boy in the Striped Pajamas

(Mark Herman, 2008)

The fictional tale of a



Millie Perkins and Richard Beymer play Anne and Peter in hiding in 1959

naive eight-year-old German boy, whose father becomes the commander of a concentration camp.



MAN OF THE PEOPLE
Oskar Schindler with his
workers at the Enamel
Factory in Krakow, Poland

ALAMY



The Killing Fields

Tom Symmons explores Cambodia's killing fields under the tyrannical Pol Pot, and the heart-breaking film they inspired

Between 1975 and 1979, the Southeast Asian nation of Cambodia was brutally ruled by the Communist Party of Kampuchea (CPK), better known as the Khmer Rouge and infamously led by the dictatorial tyrant Pol Pot.

The party's extreme socialist revolutionary policies aimed to destroy the country's history, culture and traditions, and return it to the Middle Ages by forcing the population to work in farm labour camps and establishing a self-sufficient, purely agrarian society. Pol Pot's murderous rule, beginning in April 1975 in what is now referred to as 'Year Zero', exacted a terrible human cost upon an already impoverished nation. Over four years, 25 per cent of the eight-million-strong population were either executed, or died from starvation and disease.

Based on the experiences of one of the survivors, the harrowing Oscar-winning film *The Killing Fields* (1984) is understandably difficult to watch but powerfully tells the story of the bleakest chapter in Cambodia's history.

The film's title refers to the tens of thousands of mass graves discovered after the fall of the Khmer Rouge, each containing countless bodies. The term was coined by Dith Pran, a Cambodian interpreter and photojournalist, as well as survivor of the Khmer Rouge's rule. After he fled Cambodia, he recounted his ordeal in the book, *The Death and Life of Dith Pran*, penned by his friend and fellow journalist Sydney H Schanberg – who had been assigned



to Cambodia by *The New York Times* in the early 1970s. Their book shocked the world, inspired Roland Joffé's drama and uncovered Pol Pot's regime.

SEIZING POWER

In 1968, the CPK launched a national insurgency against the pro-American government. From 1970, the struggle intensified as the Communists were assisted by the People's Army of Vietnam as the war that raged in that country spread across the border. The US, who were supporting South Vietnam against the Communist-backed North Vietnamese, responded by deploying troops. They also unleashed an intense aerial bombing campaign, aimed at destroying North Vietnamese military installations inside Cambodia and stopping the spread of Communism in the region.

This highly controversial, covert military operation resulted in huge casualties and loss of life, mostly civilian, and ultimately proved ineffective. The Communist forces continued to win

FIELDS OF BONES

Since the fall of the Khmer Rouge, ditches filled with human remains have continued to be found. Up to **20,000 mass graves** have been uncovered in Cambodia.

MURDEROUS MANTRA

It is estimated that between **1.5 and 2 million people** died under the Khmer Rouge. Their utter disregard for human life can be seen in their chilling motto: "To keep you is no benefit. To destroy you is no loss."

"Cambodia. To many Westerners it seemed a paradise. Another world, a secret world."

MAIN: Piles of skulls are found in one of the thousands of mass graves – the victims were tied together before being shot

LEFT: The Khmer Rouge collect guns in the streets as they capture Phnom Penh

territories and it is widely argued that the US incursion actually increased support for the Khmer Rouge. In April 1975, the same month that the Vietnamese city of Saigon fell, the Khmer Rouge captured the Cambodian capital, Phnom Penh, and seized power.

As the Khmer Rouge encircled the city, foreigners and some well-connected Cambodians were evacuated, including Pran's wife and four children. But despite the mounting danger, Pran insisted on staying behind with Schanberg to continue reporting the news, in the belief this would compel other countries to respond to the unfolding tragedy and come to Cambodia's aid. Previously the pair had endeavoured to reveal the shocking truth behind the sanitised reports of US bombing incursions. Now, they found themselves caught up in a violent and bloody revolution. Their lives were never more at risk, as seen in one dramatic incident when Pran's fast talking and

THE FACTS

Release date: 1984

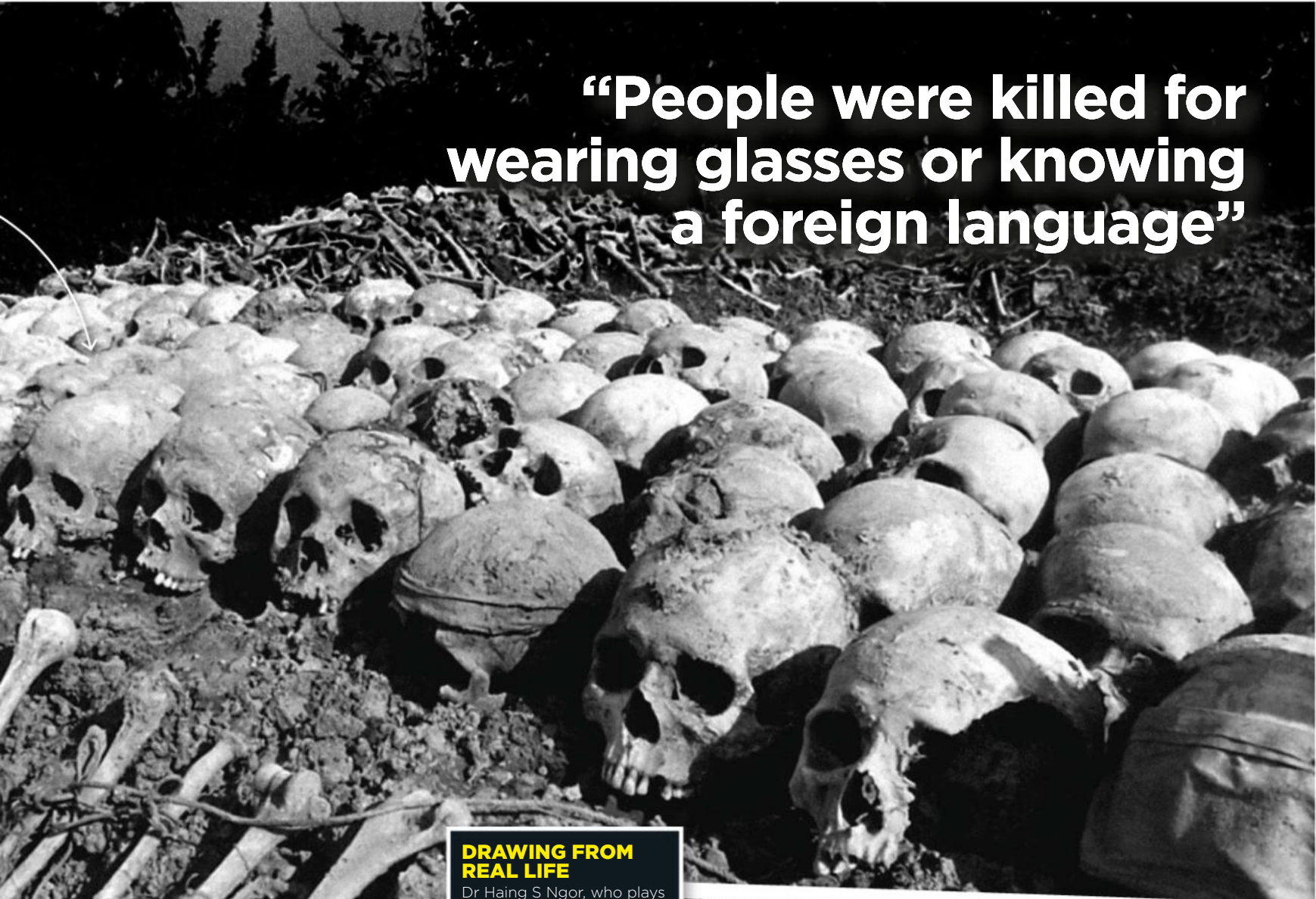
Director:

Roland Joffé

Cast:

Haing S Ngor, Sam Waterston, Craig T Nelson, John Malkovich, Julian Sands, Athol Fugard

“People were killed for wearing glasses or knowing a foreign language”



DRAWING FROM REAL LIFE

Dr Haing S Ngor, who plays Dith Pran, was himself a survivor of the killing fields. His portrayal as Pran was his **first time as an actor** and earned him an Oscar.



“I’m a reporter too. I know his heart. I love him like my brother, and I’d do anything for him.”

ABOVE: Sam Waterston and Haing S Ngor give powerful performances as Sydney Schanberg and Dith Pran
LEFT: A portrait of Pol Pot has been defaced – behind it are photos of some of the Khmer Rouge executioners



HUNGER PAINS

In the film, Dith Pran is shown as so desperate that he **drinks the blood of a live cow**. This didn't happen, but many Cambodians resorted to drastic measures, including cannibalism.



“They tell us that God is dead. And now the Party will provide everything for us.”

ABOVE: Dith Pran rushes to get his wife and four children out of Cambodia in *The Killing Fields*

RIGHT: In 1986, after his terrible ordeal under the Khmer Rouge's regime, Dith Pran and his wife Meoun Ser Dith take the oath to become citizens of America



persuasive pleas managed to save Schanberg and other western journalists from summary execution by a group of trigger-happy soldiers.

Soon after the Khmer Rouge's takeover, the only safe haven for the remaining foreigners was the French Embassy, before they too were forced to evacuate. All Cambodian nationals taking refuge in the compound were ordered to leave. Fearing Pran would be tortured or killed by the insurgents, Schanberg and others forged a French passport using an old photograph in a last ditch attempt to get their friend out of the country and to safety. But Pran decided against this risky deception and left the Embassy voluntarily while Schanberg returned to America.

ENEMIES OF THE STATE

The Khmer Rouge eliminated Cambodia's market economy, closed down schools and hospitals, outlawed religion, separated children from their parents, and forced the population to work on farms. Phnom Penh and other urban centres became 'ghost cities' emptied of their inhabitants, who were among the most vulnerable to the regime's radical social engineering policies. With little or no agricultural

knowledge, and forced to work from dawn until dusk without food or rest, former city dwellers quickly succumbed to famine and exhaustion. In an attempt to turn Cambodia into a classless and compliant society, the Khmer Rouge also executed groups considered to be enemies of the state, including ethnic minorities as well as teachers, merchants and the country's intellectual elite. Often people were killed simply for wearing glasses or knowing a foreign language.

Survival for Pran depended on hiding his past identity, and his ability to speak French and English. Only talking Khmer, Pran claimed he had been a taxi driver before the insurgency as revealing he was a photojournalist, and knew Americans, would have meant certain death.

There were other dangers facing Pran – he had to survive as a virtual slave on an agricultural commune, enduring long days of back-breaking work on a meagre

ration of a table spoon of rice a day. He found vital nourishment by scavenging for insects and rodents, but others, he claimed, resorted to eating human flesh from exhumed corpses. On another occasion, Pran stole some rice, and was viciously beaten. The threat of violence was an everyday reality for Cambodians under the Khmer Rouge: brutal punishments, torture and executions were carried out by cadres of young, heavily indoctrinated peasants.

Since returning from Cambodia, Schanberg had made great efforts to locate Pran, but the country's isolation from the Western world made this a near-impossible task. According to one source, Pran had been fed to alligators, a

REUNITED
Sydney Schanberg and Dith Pran meet in 1979 after four years





BRAINWASHING

While the Khmer Rouge sent adults to work on farms, they very successfully brainwashed children to **work as agents for the regime** and spy on their parents.

“The wind whispers of fear and hate. The war has killed love... Here, only the silent survive.”

MAIN: Haing S Ngor was a surgeon in Cambodia when the Khmer Rouge seized power and had to withhold his education and profession to survive, as well as the fact that he wore glasses. He wanted to be in *The Killing Fields* to show the world the horrors of Pol Pot

ABOVE: A Khmer Rouge fighter stands guard over forced farm labourers

gruesome fate that had in fact befallen his brother. Schanberg refused to give up hope. In 1976, he won the Pulitzer Prize for International Reporting for his Cambodia coverage, and in an emotional acceptance speech, dedicated the award to his absent friend.

SKULLS AND BONES

In December 1978, the Vietnamese military invaded Cambodia and, within a few weeks, captured Phnom Penh and overthrew the Khmer Rouge. After four years of unimaginable hardship, Pran returned to his home town, Siem Reap. There, he learned that 50 members of his family had been killed, and discovered wells filled with skulls and bones. He described the skeletal remains littering the country in shallow, mass, watery graves as “like soup bones in broth”.

Under the Vietnamese occupation of Cambodia, Pran was appointed mayor of Siam Reap. But when his American ties were discovered, he was dismissed and,

in October 1979, fled across the border to Thailand. His 60-mile trek was fraught with danger – two of Pran’s companions were killed by a land mine.

Hearing of Pran’s escape, Schanberg flew out to greet his friend. Pran then travelled to America for an emotional reunion with his wife and four children. For the rest of his life, Pran – now a photographer for *The New York Times* – embarked on a self-described “one man crusade” of regularly speaking out about the Cambodian genocide.

The Killing Fields represents an important part of his project. It may rearrange events and compress time but it remains a brave, intelligent, authentic and powerful representation of one of the darkest events in human history. 📍



WHAT DO YOU THINK?

Can a film still be considered entertaining if it is about something so horrific as the killing fields?

Email: editor@historyrevealed.com

Ones to watch: Tyrants and regimes

The Last King Of Scotland (2007)

A young Scottish doctor is confronted with the shocking inhumanity of dictator Idi Amin’s rule in Uganda after becoming his personal physician.

No (2012)

This satirical and moving film recalls the national referendum that led to the downfall of Chile’s hated military dictator General Pinochet.

The Act of Killing (2012)

A surreal and utterly



Forest Whitaker and James McAvoy star in *The Last King of Scotland*

compelling documentary about the death squads during Indonesia’s political repressions of the 1960s.

RISK OF FLIGHT

As the war drew to an end, Phnom Penh airport became increasingly perilous as the Khmer Rouge were shelling it almost on a daily basis

GETTY



Goodfellas

Tom Symmons delves into the murky underworld of the New York mafia to uncover the true story of a real 'wiseguy'

Henry Hill was just 11 years old when he began working for the New York mafia. Starting his career as an errand boy, he soon became involved in numerous criminal enterprises, taking on increasingly lucrative jobs and eventually helping to pull off one of the biggest heists in US history. For three decades, he was a highly valued member of the larger crime family – until he was 'collared' as part of a drugs bust and became a liability to the mob. Fearing execution by his former associates, he broke the mafia oath of silence. After 30 years as a mobster, Hill turned informant: he became a 'rat'.

Wiseguy: Life in a Mafia Family (1986), written by reporter Nicholas Pileggi, chronicles Henry Hill's life of crime. Beginning with his early involvement with the mob in the late fifties, it follows him through his heyday in the sixties and seventies to his arrest and entrance into the witness protection programme in 1980. This intimate account of life inside the mafia formed the basis for director Martin Scorsese's highly acclaimed film *Goodfellas* (1990).

MOB RULE

Henry Hill was born in 1943 to an Irish-American father and Italian-American mother. Growing up in the fifties in Brownsville, a poor district of Brooklyn, New York City, he was inexorably drawn to the mafia lifestyle. Living with his parents and six siblings, his home was cramped and chaotic, and money was tight. His lifestyle was a world away from that of the local mafiosi who socialised at the Tuddy Vario cab stand across the street. The impressionable youth envied the men's luxury cars, expensive clothes and jewellery, and noticed the great deference they were shown in the neighbourhood. Determined to wield the power and enjoy the wealth they did, Hill made it his ambition to become a 'wiseguy' – a recognised member of the mafia.



BREAKING RANKS

When he was a young man, Hill served three years **in the army** to please his father, who strongly disapproved of him working for the local mob.

"As far back as I can remember, I've always wanted to be a gangster."

MAIN: *Goodfellas* depicts the violence of mob life,

though only a handful of deaths are actually shown

LEFT: Henry Hill was first arrested at the age of 16, for attempting to use a stolen credit card

In his early teens, he became a gofer at the cab stand and at other local businesses, winning the approval of Tuddy Vario and his brother Paul, a high-ranking mafia member, or *capo*, in the Lucchese crime family. Hill was smart, industrious and willing to hustle for whatever errands needed running. He was also very quick to act on an opportunity: when asked to run sandwiches from the luncheonette to illegal card games, Hill made the snacks at home and pocketed the money. Soon he was given various other responsibilities, from parking the coveted mob limousines through to running 'numbers' for illegal lotteries and launching arson attacks on rival businesses.

Hill's commitment to his chosen career came at the expense of his studies, a situation to which his parents were alerted by a letter from the school truancy officer. His underworld employers swiftly remedied the problem by threatening the local mailman to ensure that he delivered no more such letters.

The importance of remaining tight-lipped was impressed on Hill early in his criminal career. At the age of 16, he was arrested for the first time, for attempting to use a stolen credit card. At the station,

the police attempted to force a confession from Hill, but he gave only his name. This refusal to talk earned him a great deal of respect from his mafia superiors, for whom the most important principle is the oath of silence, *omertà*: breaking it is punishable by death.

CRIME PAYS

The apparent invulnerability of his 'wiseguy' friends underpinned Hill's belief that honesty is for the weak and vulnerable. People who worked legitimately and obeyed the law were looked down upon as fools who were going nowhere, and were fair game to the predatory mafia. While still in his teens, Hill was earning more money than most people in his neighbourhood.

In 1965, Hill met and married Karen Friedman, and they had two children. The money, power and privilege that came with the mafia lifestyle was a seductive alternative to the mundane, humdrum existence that was the norm

THE FACTS

Release date: 1990

Director:

Martin Scorsese

Cast:

Robert De Niro, Ray

Liotta, Joe Pesci,

Lorraine Bracco,

Paul Sorvino,

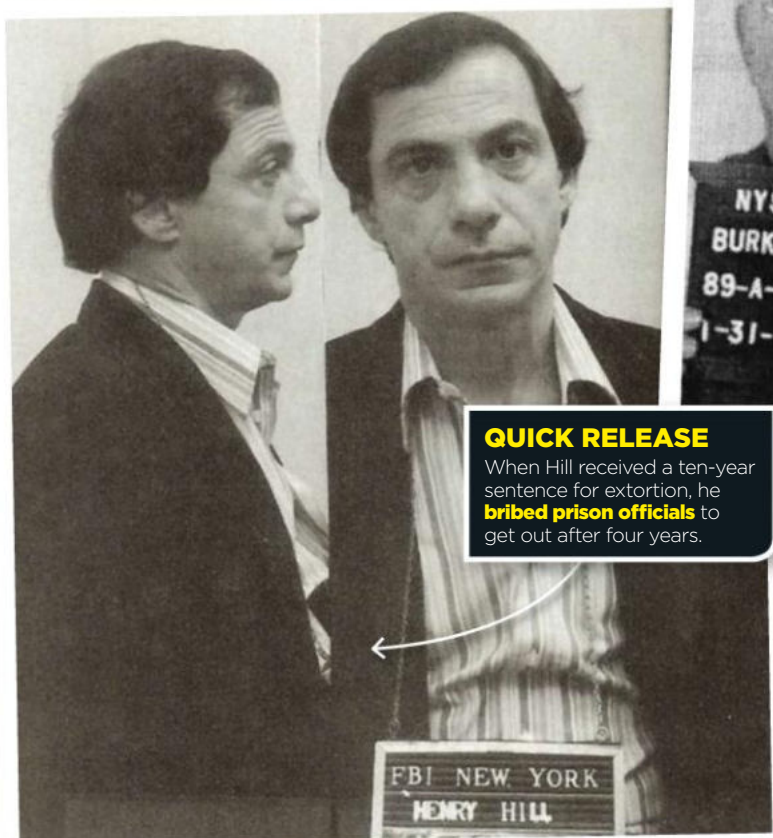
Henny Youngman



LUCK OF THE IRISH

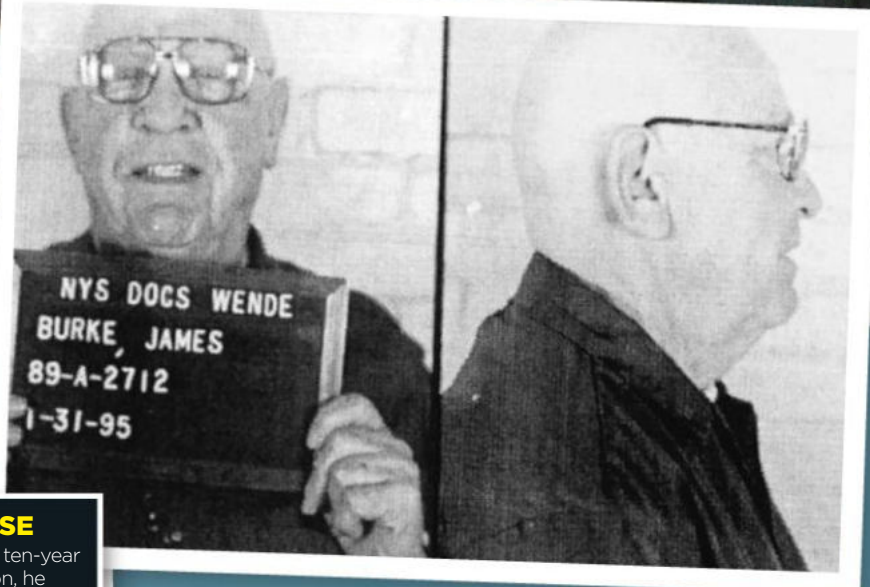
Hill was ineligible to become a 'made man' because he was not of **full Italian descent** - his father was of Irish stock.

"The heist netted \$6 million - but it led to the downfall of all involved."



QUICK RELEASE

When Hill received a ten-year sentence for extortion, he **bribed prison officials** to get out after four years.



"It's like a license to steal. It's a license to do anything."

ABOVE: James 'Jimmy the Gent' Burke was a successful hijacker and robber, but also, according to Henry Hill, a "homicidal maniac" who, Hill claimed, killed some 60 or 70 people
LEFT: After turning informant and entering witness protection, Henry Hill and his family relocated ten times to keep ahead of possible mob killers looking for revenge

“12 or 13 bodies were found each year in car boots.”



CAPO FEAR

Though Paul Vario was depicted in *Goodfellas* (by Paul Cicero) as a warm, mellow man, in fact he had a **violent temper**, once assaulting a maitre d' who had spilled wine on his wife's dress.



“Never rat on your friends and always keep your mouth shut.”

ABOVE: Paul Vario, pictured in 1969 in a police van in Nassau County, New York, was a *capo* in the Lucchese crime family. He made large sums hijacking trucks leaving JFK airport, and approved Burke's 1978 Lufthansa heist that netted \$6 million. RIGHT: Karen Friedman (played by Lorraine Bracco in *Goodfellas*) is congratulated by Paul Cicero (Paul Sorvino) on her wedding to Henry Hill. In real life, Karen and Henry were introduced by Paul Vario's son



MADE WOMAN

Karen Friedman eloped with Henry Hill just a few **months after they met**. They married in North Carolina in 1965, later returning to New York to live with Karen's parents.

for most women: many gravitated towards mobsters. Karen was thrilled that her husband was an 'action guy' who commanded enormous respect. When they went out together, she felt like 'somebody'. At the upmarket Copacabana club, the couple always had a 'ringside' table next to the stage and were bought champagne by the club's wealthy patrons. But the relationship was tumultuous, and both Karen and Henry were involved in extramarital affairs.

Moral boundaries often became blurred, particularly during tough economic times. Many legitimate businessmen admired the mafia's entrepreneurial enterprise and willingness to bend the rules, and would accept occasional bribes to earn extra income. The success of the mob's varied and lucrative criminal operations also relied on regularly paying off corrupt judges, lawyers and policemen.

There were, though, times when Hill was unable to beat the charges against him. But as most prisons were mafia run, gang members served out their sentences in relative luxury. They were housed away from the rest of the convicts, and

prison officials turned a blind eye to creature comforts such as food and alcohol being smuggled in by friends and family. During one spell behind bars, Hill even persuaded prison officials to release him on weekends to undertake 'religious training' as part of his rehabilitation – time he actually spent in Atlantic City, gambling with friends and associates.

FRIENDS LIKE THESE

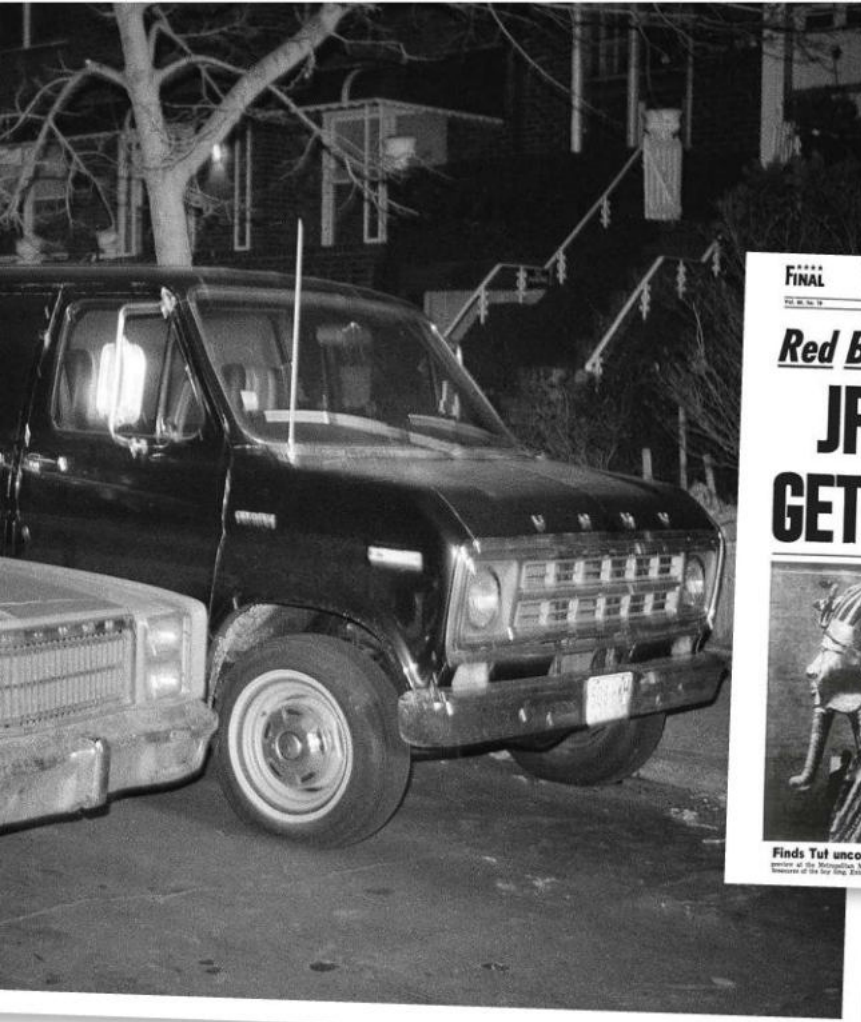
Among those associates was the notorious James 'Jimmy the Gent' Burke, a long-time associate of the Varios. In the sixties, Burke mentored Hill and another young foot soldier, Thomas ('Two-Gun Tommy') DeSimone. Hill and DeSimone started out selling stolen merchandise for Burke before becoming members of his crew and graduating to hijacking trucks.

Hijacking was Burke's true passion – and he excelled at it. Many police officers were on the gang leader's payroll, and Burke tipped delivery drivers for the 'inconvenience' of stealing their cargo – hence his 'Gent' nickname. But when it came to dealing with any potential witnesses or informants who threatened

his highly lucrative criminal enterprise, Burke was utterly ruthless. Some 12 or 13 dead bodies were discovered each year locked in the boots of stolen cars abandoned in the vicinity of JFK airport, where Burke and his gang operated.

Burke and Hill were behind two major heists at JFK. The first was the 1968 Air France robbery, which landed a \$420,000 haul. The success of this job lifted them to a higher echelon within the mafia, though neither was eligible to become a 'made man' – a fully initiated member – as they were not of pure Italian descent.

Ten years later, they were involved in another, even bigger job. Hill was tipped off about a shipment of millions of dollars in untraceable currency due to arrive at JFK from Germany. Permission for the robbery was granted by the Lucchese and Gambino crime families in return for a 'tribute' – a substantial cut of money – and on 11 December 1978, an armed gang assembled by Burke, including DeSimone, raided the Lufthansa cargo vault. Burke's men rounded up and



“Your murderers come with smiles, they come as your friends.”

MAIN: Police examine a stolen black Ford van discovered in Brooklyn after the Lufthansa heist in December 1978. Mob driver Parnell ‘Stacks’ Edwards was shot a week later for failing to destroy the van, which provided vital evidence

LEFT: Headlines declare the theft from JFK of an estimated \$5 million in cash. The heist also took another \$1 million in jewels
BELOW: Henry Hill made various public appearances later in life – here, in 2004, with Ray Liotta who played Hill in *Goodfellas*



CRIMINAL ON CAMERA

After he was **expelled from the witness protection programme**, Hill led a visible life, even appearing several times on the radio programme *The Howard Stern Show*.



handcuffed all of the employees working at the cargo terminal and forced the supervisor to open the vault before making off in a van, accompanied by a ‘crash car’ in case of police pursuit.

The Lufthansa heist netted the gang \$6 million – at that time the biggest cash robbery in American history – but it ultimately led to the downfall of all involved. Driven by greed and paranoia as the heat from the FBI and other law enforcement agencies intensified, Burke began to kill off everybody involved in the job except for a few key members of his crew. DeSimone, who had long been considered a loose cannon by the Varios, was murdered in revenge for committing the cardinal sin of killing a ‘made man’ without consent. Hill faced a similar fate.

RAT TRAP

Hill had been wholesaling marijuana, cocaine and heroin without Paul Vario’s knowledge. Like other mafia chiefs, Vario objected to drug dealing – not on moral grounds, but because of the risks involved. It attracted too much scrutiny from law enforcement and the lengthy sentences handed down for drugs offences increased the likelihood of convicted men turning informants. That Hill was a heavy drug user himself further increased the risks.

In 1980, Hill was ‘ratted out’ to narcotics detectives by one of his ‘mules’. He was convinced that both Burke and Vario were plotting to have him killed, so to avoid

mob execution or imprisonment for his crimes, he agreed to testify against his former associates. His testimony led to 50 convictions, including those of Burke and Vario. Henry, Karen and their children entered the witness protection programme, changing their names and moving to an undisclosed location.

For the most part, *Goodfellas* is true to Pileggi’s book, offering insights into the tribal relationships, criminal enterprise and casual violence of the New York mafia between the fifties and eighties. There are differences; many character names were changed (Burke became James Conway, played by Robert De Niro, while Joe Pesci was Tommy DeVito, not DeSimone). Hill is portrayed sympathetically, but in reality he was not the handsome, charming, likeable character played by Ray Liotta.

Hill had alcohol and drug problems for the majority of his adult life. He was charged with various, mostly drug-related, crimes over the following years, and was expelled from the witness protection programme in the early 1990s. He then lived openly in Los Angeles, where he died of heart failure in 2012. ☐



WHAT DO YOU THINK?

Do movies like *Goodfellas* glorify gang culture?

Email: editor@historyrevealed.com

Ones to watch: gangster flicks

Donnie Brasco

(Mike Newell, 1997) This compelling drama follows a conflicted cop who infiltrated the New York mafia in the late seventies.

American Gangster

(Ridley Scott, 2007) Denzel Washington plays Frank Lucas, kingpin of New York City’s heroin trade from the late sixties, with Russell Crowe his police nemesis.

Mesrine Parts I and II

(Jean-François Richet, 2008) Vincent Cassel



Johnny Depp and Al Pacino play undercover FBI agent and hitman in *Donnie Brasco*

gives a compelling performance as French criminal Jacques Mesrine, who became obsessed with his own celebrity.

Who were les Misérables?

Jonny Wilkes uncovers the real disastrous rebellion that inspired the enduring musical

The plight of Jean Valjean, the tragedy of Fantine and the enduring love of Marius and Cosette are well-trodden, and well-loved, stories. There have been film, television and radio productions based on Victor Hugo's sprawling and richly illustrated epic 1862 novel, *Les Misérables*, as well as the world-famous stage musical.

Since the curtains were first raised in 1980, blockbuster creations of *Les Mis* have played in the best theatres from Broadway to the West End, telling the all-singing narrative of literary hero, and spirit of human redemption, Jean Valjean. A released convict, he breaks his parole to start a new life, only to find himself entangled in the misery and political instability of 19th-century Paris. It was just a matter of time before the musical was transferred to the silver screen, and the biggest adaption came in 2012 with Tom Hooper's star-laden, award-winning and acclaimed hit.

While the plot and characters are the invention of Hugo, at the core of *Les Mis* is a real event, the June Rebellion of 1832. It is commonly mistaken to take place during the French Revolution, but the manning of the barricades seen in *Les Mis* is 40 years after King Louis XVI lost his head.

FESTERING DISCONTENT

That said, there had been so many upheavals in the country since the start of the French Revolution that to get the situation muddled is entirely forgivable, especially as little of the complicated history makes its way into *Les Mis*. First, the monarchy was removed, violently, in 1792 – four years after the Revolution erupted with the storming of Bastille Prison, a hated symbol of royal power and corruption – but this didn't solve the problems of the French people.



Instead, France was plunged into a power vacuum.

For the next 20 years, factions fought for control while the country swung from the chaos of the Reign of Terror, where tens of thousands died at the mercy of the guillotine, to the tyranny of the First French Empire under Napoleon Bonaparte. By 1815, Napoleon had fallen following the Battle of Waterloo, and the monarchy had been restored, with the Bourbons back in power and the brother of the executed King on the throne. This, incidentally, is also the year when we first meet Jean Valjean as he reaches the end of his 19 years in prison for stealing a loaf of bread.



“My friends, my friends, don’t ask me, what your sacrifice was for”

MAIN: For the night of 5 June 1832, many districts of Paris were in the control of the rebels, who made makeshift barricades out of any materials they could gather

ABOVE: Hugh Jackman as the hero of *Les Mis*, Jean Valjean
LEFT: An engraving of a doomed barricade, taken from an 1880 edition of *Les Misérables*

Discontent among the French people festered. Every time a regime was replaced or destroyed, the new power promised to be better, but to the people, one system of oppression and decadence was much the same as any other. And this was the case once again in 1830. Revolution broke out to overthrow the conservative and opulent Bourbon King Charles X, only for him to be supplanted by his cousin, Louis-Philippe of the House of Orleans.

Increasing poverty, rising prices and food shortages due to harvest failures were all weighing heavy on people's minds, as well as an outbreak of cholera across Europe. The poor were hit hardest, with some 18,000 dying in the French capital of Paris alone. Their anger was aimed at the government. Dissatisfaction was so high that rumours spread as quickly as the disease that the

THE FACTS

Release date: 2012

Director:

Tom Hooper

Cast:

Hugh Jackman,
Russell Crowe,
Anne Hathaway,
Eddie Redmayne,
Samantha Barks,
Amanda Seyfried

“To the people of France, one system of oppression and decadence was much the same as any other”

DIY BARRICADES

As well as using stolen wood, stone and furniture to build the barricades, **trees were uprooted** – including saplings that were planted to replace trees cut down for the same purpose in the 1830 Revolution.



“In the death of Lamarque we will kindle the flame, they will see that the day of salvation is near”

ABOVE: The rebels were organised by secret societies, similar to ‘Les Amis de l’ABC’ in *Les Mis*, where Eddie Redmayne’s Marius (second from left) discusses – or sings – the plights of the people
LEFT: Jean Maximilien Lamarque fought in the Napoleonic Wars and was a popular Member of Parliament. His death sparked the rebellion

THE PEOPLE’S MAN

Lamarque despised the ‘Ancien Regime’ – the social and political stance encapsulated by the Bourbons – and **criticised King Louis-Philippe** for doing little to assuage the problems of the people.





ELEPHANT AND CASTLE

The 24-metre elephant statue was conceived by Napoleon as a sign of his military might, but after his defeat at Waterloo in 1815, construction halted. The plaster model fell into disrepair – as seen in *Les Mis* – before being ripped down in 1846.



“Do you hear the people sing? Singing a song of angry men? It is the music of a people, who will not be slaves again”

MAIN: Lamarque’s funeral procession was redirected by republican rebels to the site of the Bastille Prison – where the 1789 French Revolution began
RIGHT: The ‘Elephant of the Bastille’ – as illustrated by French artist Gustave Brion – was described by *Les Mis* author Victor Hugo as “unclean, despised, repulsive and superb, ugly in the eyes of the bourgeois, melancholy in the eyes of the thinker”. The mammoth statue was never completed

French authorities were poisoning the wells in slum areas to tackle political opposition or dissent, despite no evidence that this was happening.

REVOLUTIONARY SPARK

One of those to die from the epidemic was General Jean Maximilien Lamarque. A popular hero of the Napoleonic Wars, he had served as a member of the French Parliament and was respected by the lower classes for his outspoken support for human rights and liberties. In *Les Mis*, Lamarque is described as “the people’s man”. His death on 1 June 1832 was the spark that set revolutionary fervour ablaze once again.

Republicans struck during Lamarque’s funeral procession, on 5 June, although

they had not planned for full armed insurrection but more of a protest. French Republicans generally met in secret societies led by key figures such as the Marquis de Lafayette. The student-led society in *Les Mis*, Les Amis de l’ABC (Friends of the ABC) is a fictitious group, and none of its members existed, but it was groups such as this that disrupted Lamarque’s funeral. They intercepted the procession and redirected it to where the Bastille once stood, a moment captured in *Les Mis* with the rousing refrain: “Do you hear the people sing? Singing a song of angry men? It is the music of a people who will not be slaves again!”

At around 5pm, the first gun shots between the protestors and troops rang out, supposedly when a man in

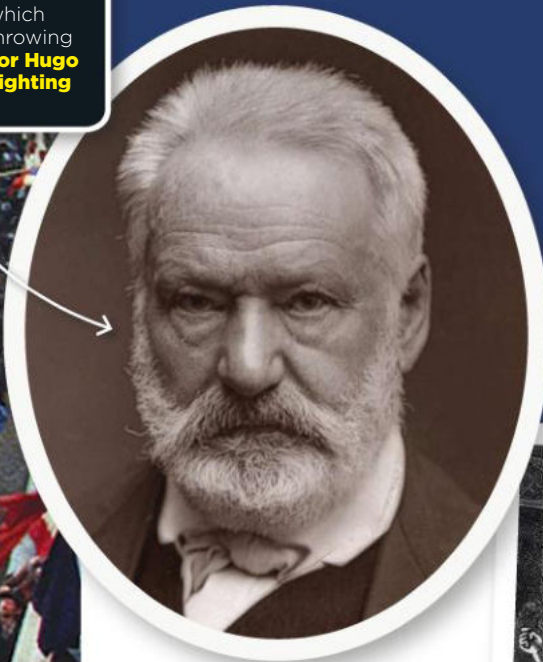
the crowd stepped forward waving a red flag bearing the words ‘Liberty or Death’. The protest was turning into a rebellion, forcing its members to retreat to safer areas and, collecting any and all materials they could, build barricades on either side of the River Seine. Some of the dozens of barricades went up in under 15 minutes, while weapons were scavenged, from clubs to rifles looted from Paris’s gunsmiths.

For the 3,000 or so armed and shielded rebels, it was a hopeful start.



HUGO THE HERO

When yet another revolution broke out in 1848, which succeeded in overthrowing Louis-Philippe, **Victor Hugo was among those fighting** on the barricades.



Republican Marius are there in *Les Mis* and are the only survivors as they escape into the sewers.

Some 800 men were killed or wounded in the 24 hours of violence and gunfire, amounting to a small percentage of the soldiers in Paris, but an overwhelming loss for the rebels. As a grief-stricken Marius cries to his fallen comrades after the smoke has cleared, "My friends, my friends, don't ask me what your sacrifice was for"; the June Rebellion was in vain. It changed nothing and came nowhere near to threatening the monarchy as the Revolution had 40 years earlier.

Hugo decided to focus *Les Mis* on this isolated and doomed event as he was directly caught up in it. On 5 June, he had been writing in a Paris garden when he heard gunfire nearby and, instead of running away, he ran towards the noise. Taking shelter at the side of the street, he was caught in a battle – with bullets whizzing past his head before he managed to escape. If it wasn't for Hugo's *Les Mis*, the June Rebellion may have been completely lost from the history books. 📍



WHAT DO YOU THINK?

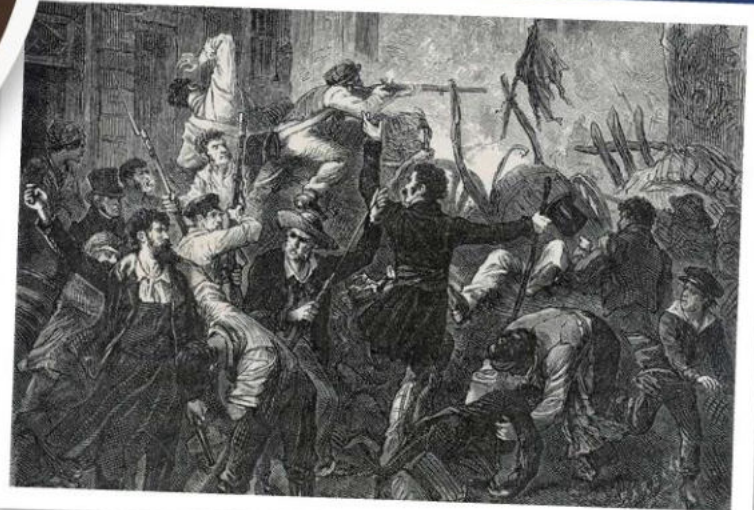
How important is it to know the history in enjoying a production of *Les Misérables*?

Email: editor@historyrevealed.com

"The rebels were banking on the citizens of Paris joining the rebellion... this never happened"

"We strive toward a larger goal, our little lives don't count at all"

LEFT: Victor Hugo got caught in the middle of the fighting of the June Rebellion, which inspired him to pen *Les Misérables*. It would take 30 years, however, for him to complete and publish his masterpiece
BELOW: Barely 24 hours after the June Rebellion began, the last barricade at the Rue du Cloître Saint-Merri was surrounded by soldiers of the National Guard. Once it fell, the rebellion whimpered to an end



That night, they controlled whole districts of Paris, with only sporadic firefights echoing around the capital. The rebels, however, were banking on the citizens of Paris joining the rebellion, ensuring sheer weight of numbers would overwhelm the opposing soldiers. This never happened and, as quickly as it began, the rebellion lost heart. In fact, when King Louis-Philippe showed himself in the streets, he was greeted by cheers from the people.

FLASH IN THE PAN

One by one, barricades fell as government reinforcements marched through Paris, reclaiming the streets. The army was mustered with cannons to assist the National Guard so that, by the morning of 6 June, only a handful of barricades remained. The last brave, if futile, stand at a café in central Paris lasted until the evening before it was overrun. Jean Valjean and student

Ones to watch: French history

The Three Musketeers

(Richard Lester, 1973)

A star-studded cast, swashbuckling fight sequences and a soupçon of slapstick makes this version of Dumas' classic tales one of the best.



Alexandre Dumas' *The Three Musketeers* has rarely been so much fun

Danton

(Andrzej Wajda, 1983)

Gerard Depardieu sizzles as Danton, as he struggles to survive in revolutionary France.

L'Allée du Roi

(Nina Companeez, 1996)

A gripping, entertaining

mini-series for French television about the relationships and reign of Louis XIV – the 'Sun King'. Available on DVD.

A Man for All Seasons

Mark Glancy examines the 1966 film about Sir Thomas More, who famously disagreed with Henry VIII's desire for divorce



“Does a man need a Pope to tell him where he’s sinned?”

LEFT: As Lord Chancellor, More was Henry's right-hand man, but he fell out of favour when he stood by his religious beliefs and defied the King
MAIN: Paul Scofield won a best actor Oscar for his portrayal of More in the film

Sir Thomas More's appointment as Lord Chancellor, in 1529, made him one of the most respected and prominent men in England. Yet just five years later More was imprisoned in the Tower of London, facing trial and execution for treason. After his conviction, he was not hanged, drawn and quartered – as traitors often were – but his severed head was placed on a pike on London Bridge so that all could witness this once powerful man's ignominious end.

History has been kinder to him. He was canonised in 1935, becoming Saint Thomas More. In the 1960s, Robert Bolt's play *A Man for All Seasons* celebrated his virtues and idealism. The play soon became a film – now considered

a classic – which further enhanced and popularised More's reputation. Indeed, in 2002, More stood in the top half of the BBC's ranking of the 100 greatest Britons.

Born in 1478, More was the son of a prosperous London lawyer. He was educated at the University of Oxford and became a lawyer himself. Deeply religious, he considered devoting his life to the church, and as a young man he lived and worshipped among the Carthusian monks near what is now Charterhouse Square in London. Ultimately, however, he decided that he would rather be “a good husband than a bad priest”. His first marriage was a happy one which yielded three daughters and one son, and after his first wife's death he enjoyed a second happy marriage. Unusually for the time, he insisted that his daughters should be as

well educated as his son, and his eldest daughter, Margaret, excelled as a student. More's own scholarship, and especially his philosophical treatise *Utopia*, is still widely studied today. He was knighted in 1521 and, after his election as a Member of Parliament, he became Speaker of the House of Commons in 1523. More was also a trusted advisor to Henry VIII, who sought his opinions and guidance in crucial matters of state.

STEADFAST VIRTUE

A Man for All Seasons does not focus on Thomas More's successful career or his happy private life. It is the story of his downfall, told in no uncertain terms. More is portrayed as a man of steadfast virtue caught up in a maelstrom of

THE FACTS

Director:

Fred Zinnemann

Cast:

Paul Scofield, Wendy Hillier, Susannah York, Leo McKern, Robert Shaw, Orson Welles, Vanessa Redgrave



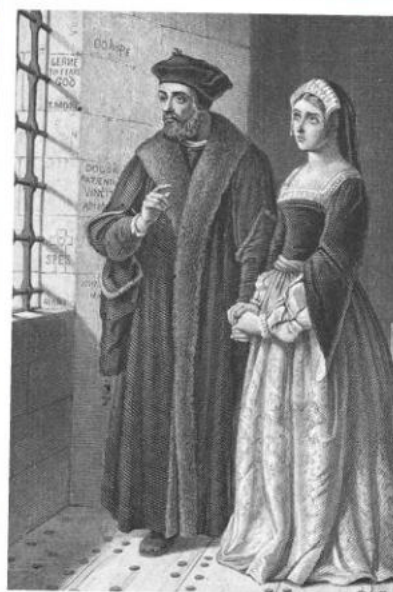
BAD BEHAVIOUR

Although Henry VIII had a temper, he was not known for the **childish tantrums** and **mercurial behaviour** demonstrated in this film.



RESTING PLACE

More asked that his headless corpse be returned to his daughter Margaret for burial. She later **retrieved his severed head**, and his skull is believed to be in the Roper vault at St Dunstan's in Canterbury.



“Perhaps we must stand fast a little – even at the risk of being heroes.”

FAR LEFT: Susannah York played Margaret More in the film

LEFT: Although More had three daughters and a son, the film only features his eldest daughter, Margaret



WAR WITH WOLSEY

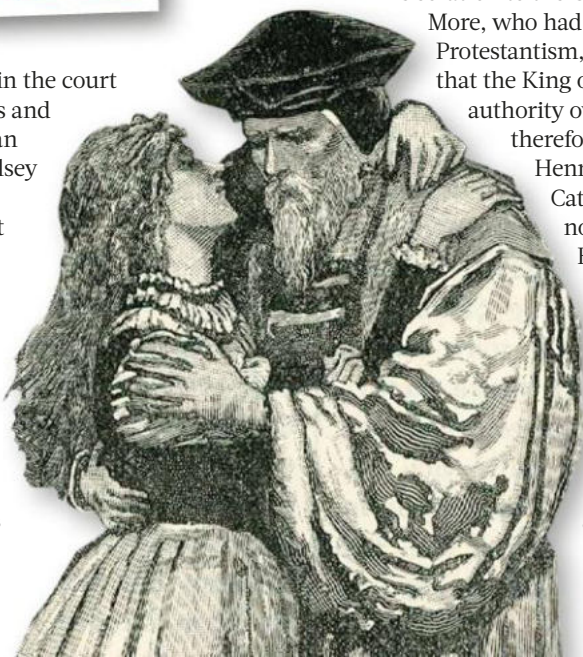
The antagonism between **Cardinal Wolsey** and **Thomas More** is overstated. In fact, More benefitted from his subservience to Wolsey and did not criticise him until he fell from the King's favour.



“England needs an heir!”

LEFT: Under the rule of Henry VIII, Wolsey rose to positions of great power, but his failure to secure the annulment of Henry's marriage to Catherine of Aragon led to his eventual downfall
MAIN: Orson Welles plays a bloated Wolsey to perfection, highlighting More's principled stand against the pressure to condone the King's divorce

corrupt politics and intrigue in the court of Henry VIII in the late 1520s and early 1530s. “England needs an heir!”, a bloated Cardinal Wolsey bellows in an early scene. Wolsey urges More to support a request to Pope Clement VII to have the longstanding marriage of Henry and Catherine of Aragon annulled because Catherine had not produced a male heir to the throne. This is the first in a succession of scenes in which ambitious or pragmatic friends, officials

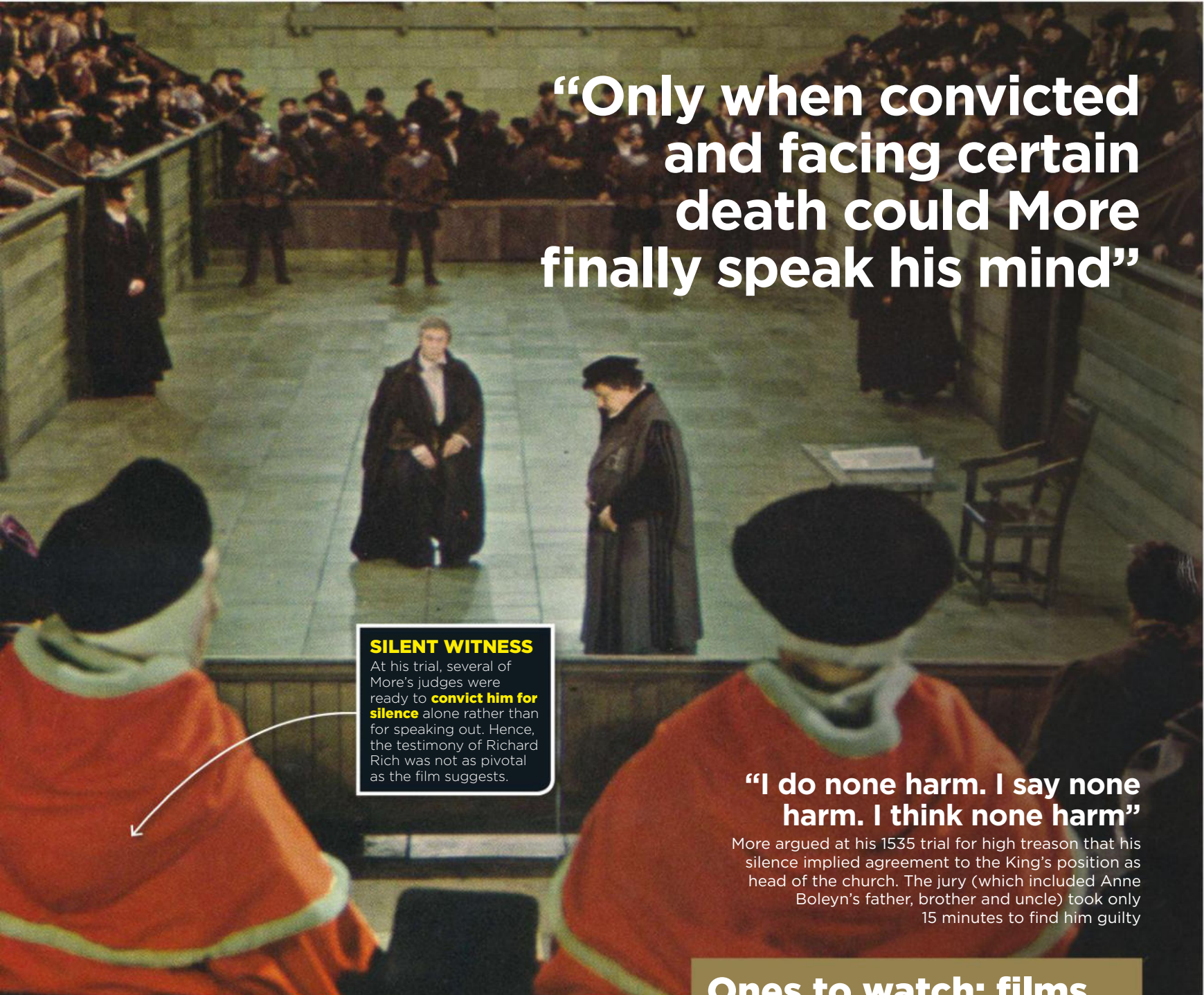


and family members plead with More to bend to the King's will and accept his solution to the Great Matter. But More, who had long opposed Protestantism, could not accept that the King of England had authority over the papacy. He therefore could not accept Henry's divorce from Catherine. He would not attend Anne Boleyn's coronation (and his absence was noted and

FAMILY TIES
More was unusual in giving his three daughters the same standard of classical education as his son

displeased the King). Most importantly, he refused to swear an oath recognising the 1534 Act of Succession, which declared that Anne Boleyn's offspring would be the rightful heirs to the throne.

More was careful not to speak out about his objections. He did not seek a confrontation with the King or to encourage opposition to him. He was not leading a rebellion but instead regarded his religious objections to be a matter of personal conscience. He hoped that, by not speaking out, he could be faithful both to his king and to his conscience. But his refusal to affirm his support for Henry VIII alienated the King and eventually led to More's arrest and trial. Only when convicted and facing certain death could More finally speak his mind, and at the close of the trial he declared that placing royal authority



“Only when convicted and facing certain death could More finally speak his mind”

SILENT WITNESS

At his trial, several of More's judges were ready to **convict him for silence** alone rather than for speaking out. Hence, the testimony of Richard Rich was not as pivotal as the film suggests.

“I do none harm. I say none harm. I think none harm”

More argued at his 1535 trial for high treason that his silence implied agreement to the King's position as head of the church. The jury (which included Anne Boleyn's father, brother and uncle) took only 15 minutes to find him guilty

over religious authority was “directly repugnant to the laws of God and His holy church”.

A MORE COMPLEX MAN

More was dubbed ‘a man for all seasons’ by one of his contemporaries, and the description stuck because he remained true to his beliefs despite the increasingly threatening circumstances. Yet the film shows only More's own martyrdom, and his all-encompassing virtue obscures the real man's reported wit, humour and warmth.

The film also steers clear of his vehement opposition to what he regarded as the heresy of Protestantism. Some historians have argued that More may have condoned the torture of heretics, but others refute this (and More himself denied it). What is

undeniable, though, is that he condoned the execution of heretics, and six were burned at the stake during More's time as Lord Chancellor. Thus, Thomas More was a martyr who made martyrs of others, but this is perhaps an overly complicated idea for a film hero.

The film constructs its hero according to the values of the time in which it was written and filmed. More's determination to defy hypocrisy and established authority, and to remain true to his conscience, was tailored in *A Man for All Seasons* to fit the idealism of the 1960s. Its fine performances and beautifully rendered locations at Hampton Court and along the River Thames also added to its appeal. Nevertheless, it is a film that shies away from the complexities of both the man and the period that it portrays. 🕒

Ones to watch: films about Henry VIII

The Private Life of Henry VII

(Directed by Alexander Korda, 1933) Playing Henry's marital troubles for laughs, Charles Laughton is still a charismatic king.

Henry VII and His Six Wives

(Directed by Waris Hussein, 1972) Henry looks back on his reign from his deathbed.

The Other Boleyn Girl

(Directed by Justin Chadwick, 2008) This



Keith Michell plays Henry VIII in *Henry VII and His Six Wives* (1972)

melodrama portrays life in the troubled Boleyn family and suggests that Anne's sister Mary was Henry's true love.

All the President's Men

Mark Glancy delves into the true story of Watergate, when a bungled burglary and two young journalists brought down a President...



“To leave office before my term is completed is abhorrent to every instinct in my body.”

MAIN: Nixon resigns after the revelations of Watergate, before he can be impeached for corruption

LEFT: Before he leaves office, Anti-Nixon protestors demonstrate outside the White House

President Nixon's press spokesman, Ron Ziegler, referred to it as a “third-rate burglary” when asked for an official response to a break-in at the Watergate complex, Washington DC. Ziegler's response was all too true. The five burglars who were caught breaking in to the Democratic Party national headquarters on 17 June 1972 were hardly mastermind criminals. They were spotted because a security guard noticed the tape they applied to the office door's lock, to prevent it from catching, and, when apprehended, one had the name of a White House official in his address book. It is now thought they were either attempting to steal information or plant monitoring equipment, but at the time it seemed highly unlikely that Nixon

or his campaign team had anything to do with the break-in. It took place five months before the presidential election and Nixon's re-election already seemed assured. The Republican President's approval ratings were strong and his likely Democratic opponent, Senator George McGovern, was considered too liberal even for many Democrats. So why would Nixon or his re-election team take such a wild and unnecessary risk?

UNLIKELY PARTNERS

The answer emerged slowly – so slowly, in fact, that on voting day, less than half of the public were aware of the Watergate break-in. Nixon won a landslide victory. But the two *Washington Post* reporters at the centre of *All the President's Men*, Carl Bernstein and Bob Woodward, refused to accept the White House's

denials and evasions at face value, and they kept the story alive.

Bernstein and Woodward seemed a disparate duo. Bernstein was a college drop-out who had worked on newspapers since he was 16. Woodward was a Yale graduate and a veteran of the Navy Officer Corps, but he had little experience as a reporter when he was hired by the *Post* in 1971. Both men were a year or two shy of their 30th birthdays and neither was a political journalist. Their involvement with the Watergate case began because they were working the ‘city desk’, covering minor local news stories, when the burglary was reported. Through dogged investigation they ultimately linked the burglars to the Committee to Re-Elect the President

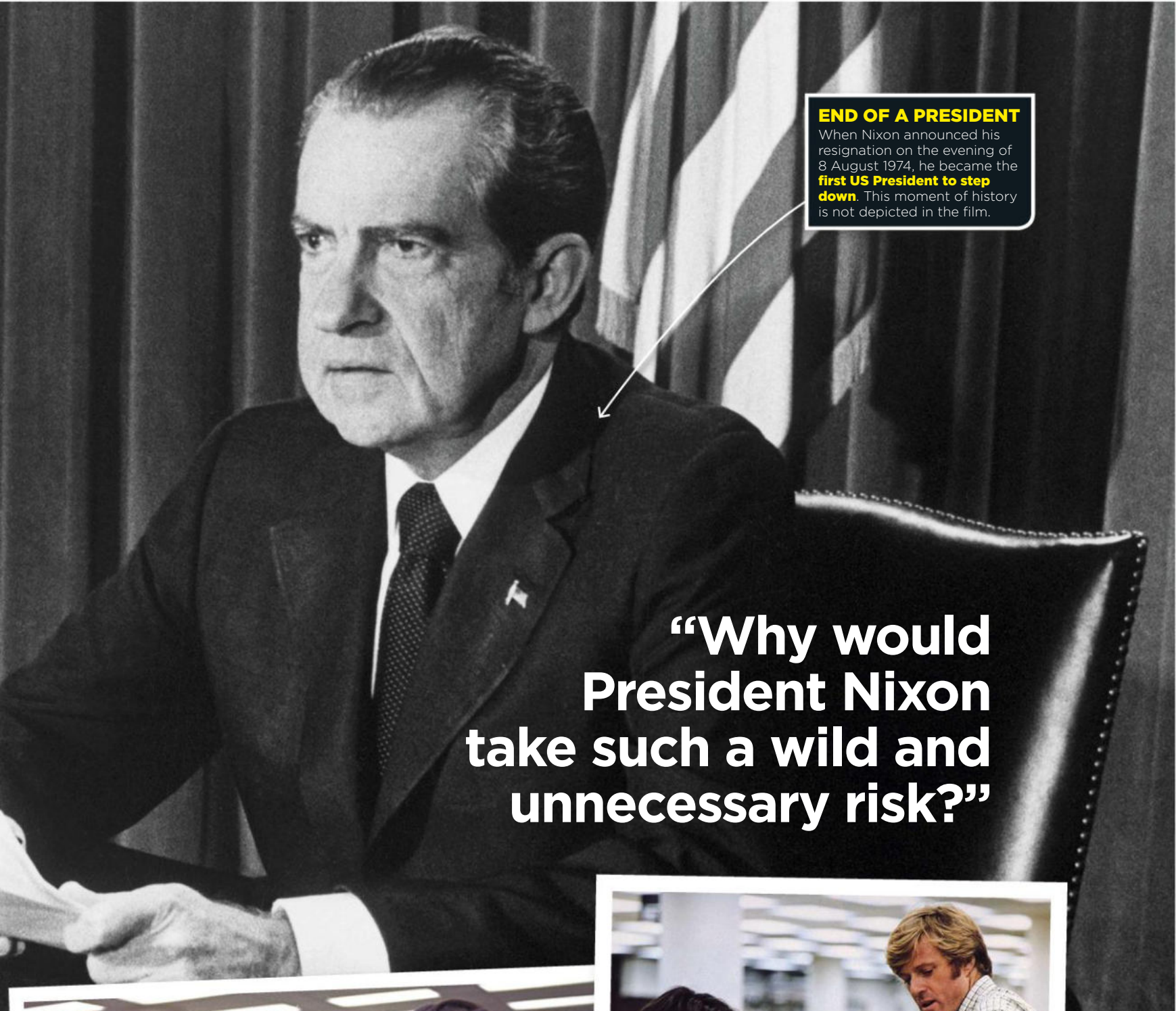
THE FACTS

Release date: 1976

Director:

Alan J Pakula

Cast: Robert Redford, Dustin Hoffman, Jason Robards, Hal Holbrook



END OF A PRESIDENT

When Nixon announced his resignation on the evening of 8 August 1974, he became the **first US President to step down**. This moment of history is not depicted in the film.

“Why would President Nixon take such a wild and unnecessary risk?”



POETIC LICENSE

The film suggests that Woodward and Bernstein were responsible for single-handedly **bringing down Nixon**, but their work was most important in the early stages of the scandal.



“Woodward. Bernstein. You’re both on the story.”

LEFT: Carl Bernstein and Bob Woodward, seen here in the offices of the Washington Post, win a Pulitzer Prize for their reporting of the Watergate scandal
ABOVE: Hoffman and Redford star as the budding journalists during their investigation

SECRET SOURCE

It is an iconic moment of the film, but 'Deep Throat' did not say **"follow the money"**. That memorable line was invented by screenwriter William Goldman.

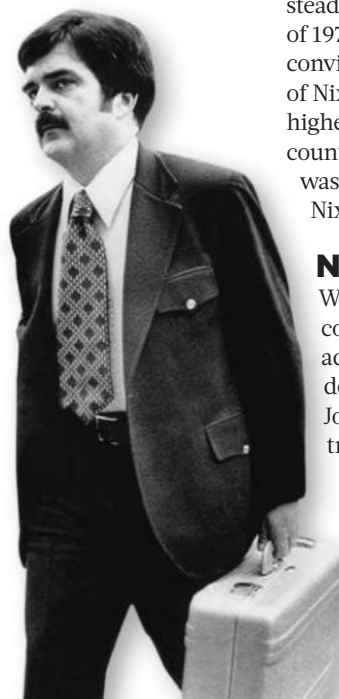


"I'll keep you in the right direction if I can, but that's all. Just... follow the money."

LEFT: The identity of the clandestine source was a secret until 2005, when Mark Felt, former associate director of the FBI, admitted he was 'Deep Throat' MAIN: Robert Redford's Bob Woodward meets 'Deep Throat', in a parking garage – throughout the film, the audience never sees his face properly

background' on the story and not as a primary or named source. Hence, his identity was never revealed, and he was known only as 'Deep Throat' even to the *Post* editors. Woodward met him alone – late at night and in remote, deserted car parks – and was urged not to limit the investigation to Watergate, but to reach higher.

Ultimately, it was revealed that the Nixon administration was thoroughly and utterly corrupt. The administration habitually employed espionage, sabotage and a host of 'dirty tricks' – not just in the election campaign of 1972 but routinely and in pursuit of any political advantage. Watergate was just one event in a long line of illegal activities, but the steadily mounting investigation of the burglary triggered a White



House cover-up, which slowly and steadily unravelled over the course of 1973 and 1974. Dozens of trials and convictions ensued, involving many of Nixon's closest advisors. Even the highest law-enforcement official in the country, Attorney General John Mitchell, was involved while serving as head of Nixon's re-election campaign.

NIXON'S DOWNFALL

Woodward and Bernstein alone could not take credit for the administration's disgrace and downfall. US District Court Judge John Sirica, who presided over the trial of the burglars, pursued the

RELEASE THE TAPES
Tapes of Nixon's cover-up are carried into court



and to White House officials G Gordon Liddy and E Howard Hunt. Convicted of burglary and conspiracy in January 1973, Liddy and Hunt were the first of the President's men to fall.

Yet one break-in and two corrupt officials were only the tip of the iceberg. Prior to Watergate, even Woodward and Bernstein couldn't have imagined the full extent of the Nixon administration's involvement in illegal activities. They were encouraged to think the worst by an informant – a high-ranking government official who was a source of Woodward's. The whistleblower insisted that he could only serve as 'deep

ESCAPING JUSTICE?

To many, Nixon got off lightly by resigning, and they wanted him to be indicted. Nixon's successor, Gerald Ford, offered him a "**full, free and absolute pardon**," on 8 September 1974.



"I must put the interest of America first..."

Nixon's Presidency was hemorrhaging support, but he vowed to stay in office, famously saying, "I am not a crook." When impeachment hearings were opened, however, he decided to jump before he was pushed

Ones to watch: Watergate scandal

Nixon

(Oliver Stone, 1995)

Anthony Hopkins stars as Nixon in this thorough account of the man's life and presidency.

Dick

(Andrew Fleming, 1999)

In a most unlikely comedy, Kirsten Dunst and Michelle Williams are the teenage girls who uncover and expose the Watergate scandal.

Frost/Nixon

(Ron Howard, 2008). An entrancing account of



Frank Langella stars as Nixon opposite Michael Sheen's David Frost

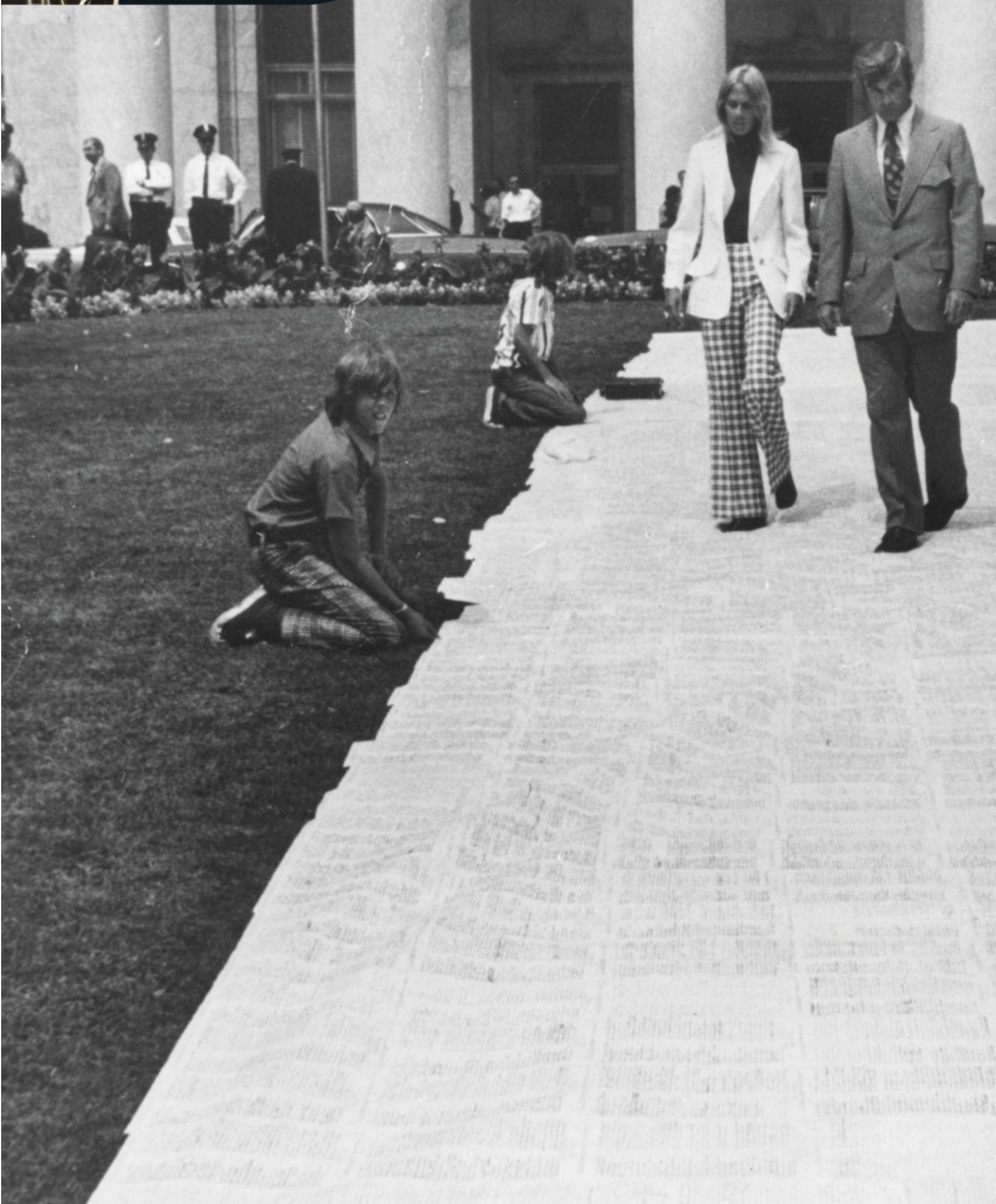
David Frost's interview in 1977, in which Frost pushed for an admission of guilt from former President Nixon.

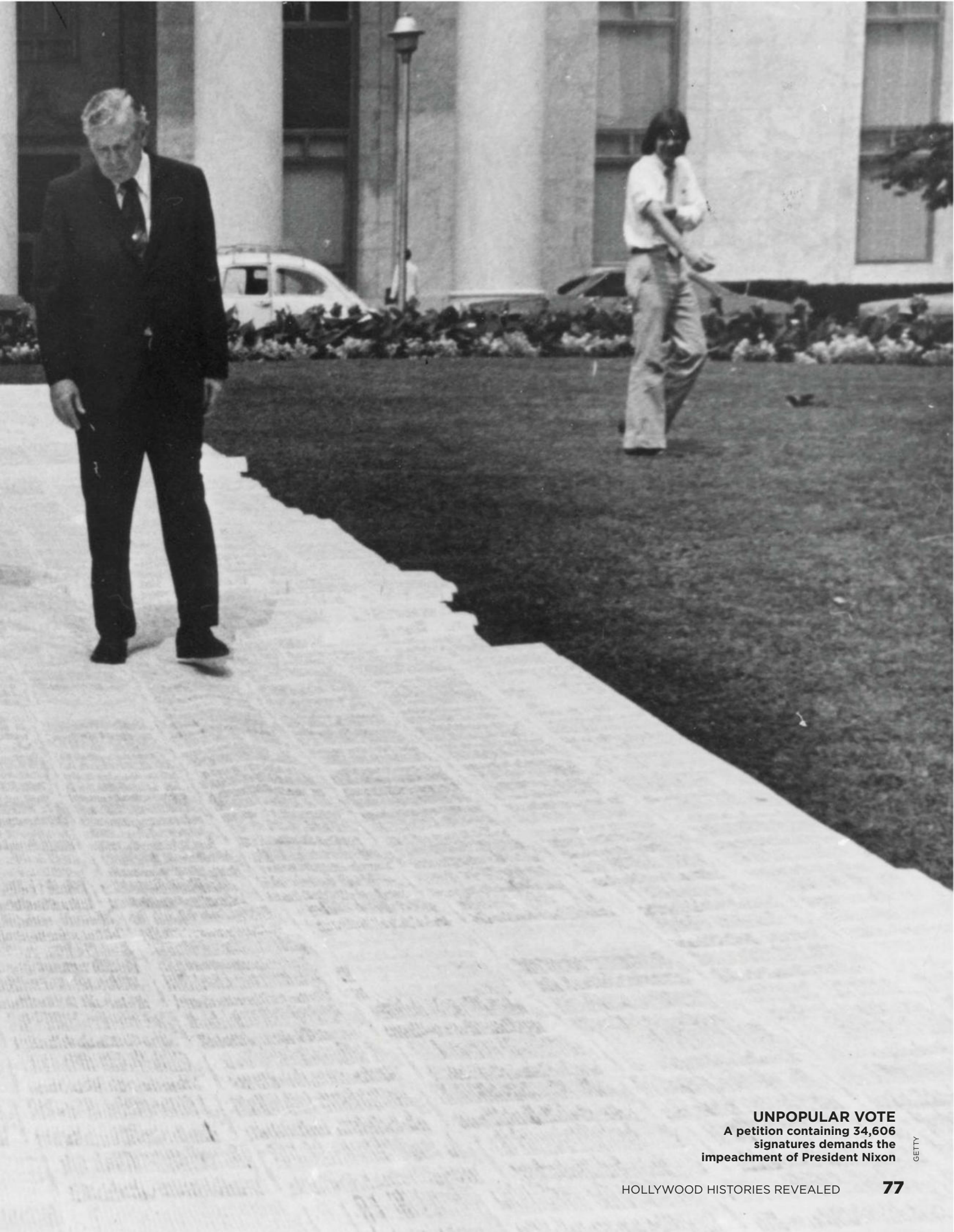
case aggressively. Senator Sam Ervin headed congressional hearings broadcast live on national television every day. When it was revealed that Nixon had installed a voice-activated taping system in the Oval Office (and other rooms), which automatically recorded all of his conversations, Sirica issued a subpoena ordering the President to release the tapes relevant to the Watergate case. Nixon's reluctance to heed this and further subpoenas led the US House of Representatives to commence impeachment proceedings against Nixon. On 8 August 1974, the President resigned and the scandal came to a murky end.

By the time of Nixon's resignation, Woodward and Bernstein had already published their best-selling account of how the scandal unfolded. The actor

Robert Redford had advised them to write the book as a memoir and bought the rights for a film. In his hands, the film focussed squarely on the detection of the crimes rather than the crimes themselves. With Redford playing Woodward, and Dustin Hoffman co-starring as Bernstein, the Watergate saga became a story about two ambitious young reporters rather than corrupt, elderly officials. In 1976, when Americans were weary of Watergate and looking forward to the country's bicentennial celebrations, the reoriented story suited the public mood. *All the President's Men* was a box-office hit, and today it is remembered as a gripping political classic. On screen, this true story of the country's worst political scandal was transformed into an affirmation of the all-American values of hard work, truth and justice. 🗳️

**ALL THE
PRESIDENT'S MEN**





UNPOPULAR VOTE
A petition containing 34,606
signatures demands the
impeachment of President Nixon

GETTY

Amadeus

Mark Glancy explores the real relationship between the rival composers Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart and Antonio Salieri...

Like many historical films, *Amadeus* is far from a faithful account of what is known about the period and the people that it portrays. Events are exaggerated, condensed and simplified, and the complexity of real characters is reduced to suit the needs of a dramatic contrast between good and evil. Such historical liberties are often bemoaned by experts, but few seemed to mind the wayward story points of *Amadeus*. This is no doubt partly attributable to the film's high entertainment value: it is an unusually lively, bawdy and funny historical film. It revels in the boyish humour and high spirits of its main character, the composer Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756-1791), played with jubilant gusto by Tom Hulce. But the film's appeal is also attributable to Mozart's music. The composer's vulgar hijinks serve as a contrast to the transcendent beauty of his music, beautifully performed on the soundtrack by the Academy of St Martin in the Fields. Thus, even the most stringent historical purists couldn't help but find something to enjoy in *Amadeus*.

CONFESSING MURDER

For all its liberties, the story is actually based on a real rumour that circulated in Vienna in the 1820s. While gravely ill, the rival composer Antonio Salieri (1750-1825) confessed he had murdered Mozart decades earlier by poisoning him. Salieri was suffering from dementia at the time of this confession, and he later retracted it, but some – including Mozart's widow Constanze – chose to believe the claim. More than 150 years later, the English playwright Peter Shaffer based the story of *Amadeus* not just on Salieri's confession but also the idea that Salieri had been wracked by a deep and bitter jealousy of Mozart throughout the ten years that they both lived and worked as composers in Vienna. In the fun-loving Mozart, the story goes, Salieri saw a true



THE FACTS

Release date: 1984

Director:

Milos Forman

Cast:

Tom Hulce, F. Murray Abraham, Elizabeth Berridge, Roy Dotrice, Simon Callow, Jeffrey Jones

genius – one who made his own talent and accomplishments appear mediocre – and this drove him on a vendetta that ultimately culminated in murder.

Shaffer's story makes for great drama, but it is, of course, biased against Salieri. In fact, at the time, Salieri was regarded as the more accomplished musician and composer. From the 1770s through the 1790s, he composed dozens of operas, many of them proving popular and considered innovative. A mark of his prominence was his appointment to the influential post of Kapellmeister, or musical director, to the court of Holy Roman Emperor Joseph II. Salieri was also a teacher whose pupils included Ludwig Van Beethoven, Franz Liszt and

A TRICKY AFFAIR

In *Amadeus*, a soprano by the name of Katerina Cavalieri gets **caught in the middle** of Mozart's rivalry with Salieri. There is no evidence that she had an affair with Mozart, as occurs in the film – in fact, it is suspected that she was **Salieri's mistress**.

"Forgive me, Majesty. I am a vulgar man! But I assure you, my music is not."

MAIN: Mozart, ebulliently played by Tom Hulce, conducts his latest opera with Emperor Joseph II in attendance
LEFT: A portrait of Mozart. His middle name 'Amadeus' roughly translates as 'love of God'

Franz Schubert. In his private life, he may not have had Mozart's exuberance but nor was he the lonely and celibate man played with such convincing severity by the F. Murray Abraham in *Amadeus*. Salieri was married at the time he knew Mozart, and he fathered no fewer than eight children.

FRIENDLY RIVALS

If Salieri had little reason to fear or resent Mozart's success, there was naturally a degree of rivalry between two men working in the same profession and in the same city. Salieri (born near Verona) and Mozart (born in Salzburg) belonged to separate musical coteries, and Italian and German opera fell into

“The film has enough laughter, conflict, romance and tragedy to please any opera lover”

AGE GAP

In reality, Salieri was **only six years older** than Mozart, but the difference in their status is exaggerated in the film with the casting of F. Murray Abraham and Tom Hulce, who are **14 years apart** in age.

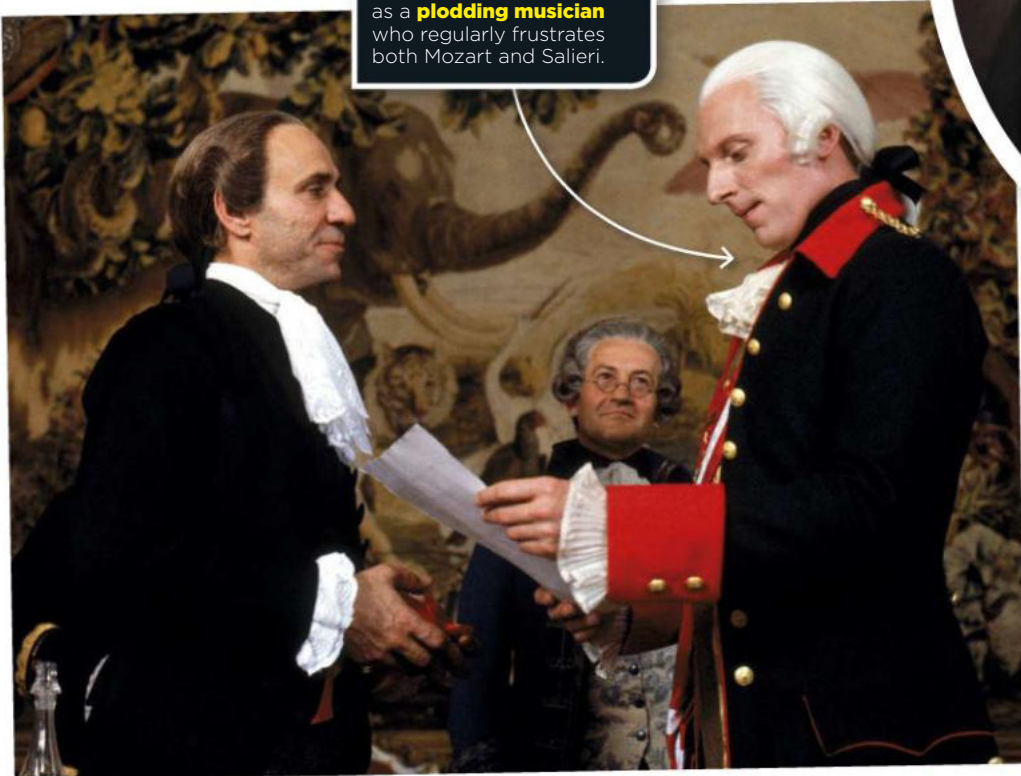
STOLEN GIFTS

Holy Roman Emperor Joseph II was both a fine cellist and pianist, but in the film, his abilities have been removed – he is seen as a **plodding musician** who regularly frustrates both Mozart and Salieri.



“This was a music I’d never heard... It seemed to me that I was hearing the very voice of God.”

ABOVE: The real Salieri was not as pious or severe as portrayed in the film
LEFT: F. Murray Abraham’s Salieri (left) was made court composer for Emperor Joseph II, played by Jeffrey Jones





CHILD PRODIGY

Wolfgang's first taste of fame came in 1763 – his father Leopold took him and his similarly talented sister on a **three-year tour of Europe**, where they played for kings, queens and emperors in seven countries.



“It’s all right here in my noodle. The rest is just scribbling. Scribbling and bibbling, bibbling and scribbling.”

LEFT: In *Amadeus*, Mozart is shown to work tirelessly on a composition when he is struck with inspiration

MAIN: In the 1760s, the Mozart family went on a grand tour of Europe, boasting the skills of the young Wolfgang – he was just seven years old when the tour began

and out of favour during this period. The composers were therefore vying for work, including the prestigious post of musical tutor to the Princess of Württemberg, which Salieri successfully attained. As composers, they saw their operas debut side by side, yet there is little evidence of any animosity between them. Mozart did complain in a letter to his father that Joseph II favoured Salieri over all other composers, but that observation was an accurate one. Both Mozart and his father suspected that, behind the scenes, Salieri tried to undermine Mozart’s success, but these were hardly unusual suspicions in a field so reliant on patronage. In public, fellow composers reported that Mozart and Salieri were friendly with another. Shortly after the premiere of Mozart’s *The Magic Flute*, Salieri

attended a performance with Mozart, and applauded warmly and vigorously. Thus, any ill feeling between Mozart and Salieri was borne by the former rather than the latter – contrary to what is strongly depicted in *Amadeus* – and it stemmed from Salieri’s status and success rather than his perceived mediocrity.

RISEING CAREER

Mozart’s resentments were those of a younger man struggling for position in the world. Although he was a wunderkind, he spent many years struggling to find a suitable post or patronage. He and his father travelled widely during his youth, seeking a distinguished appointment but

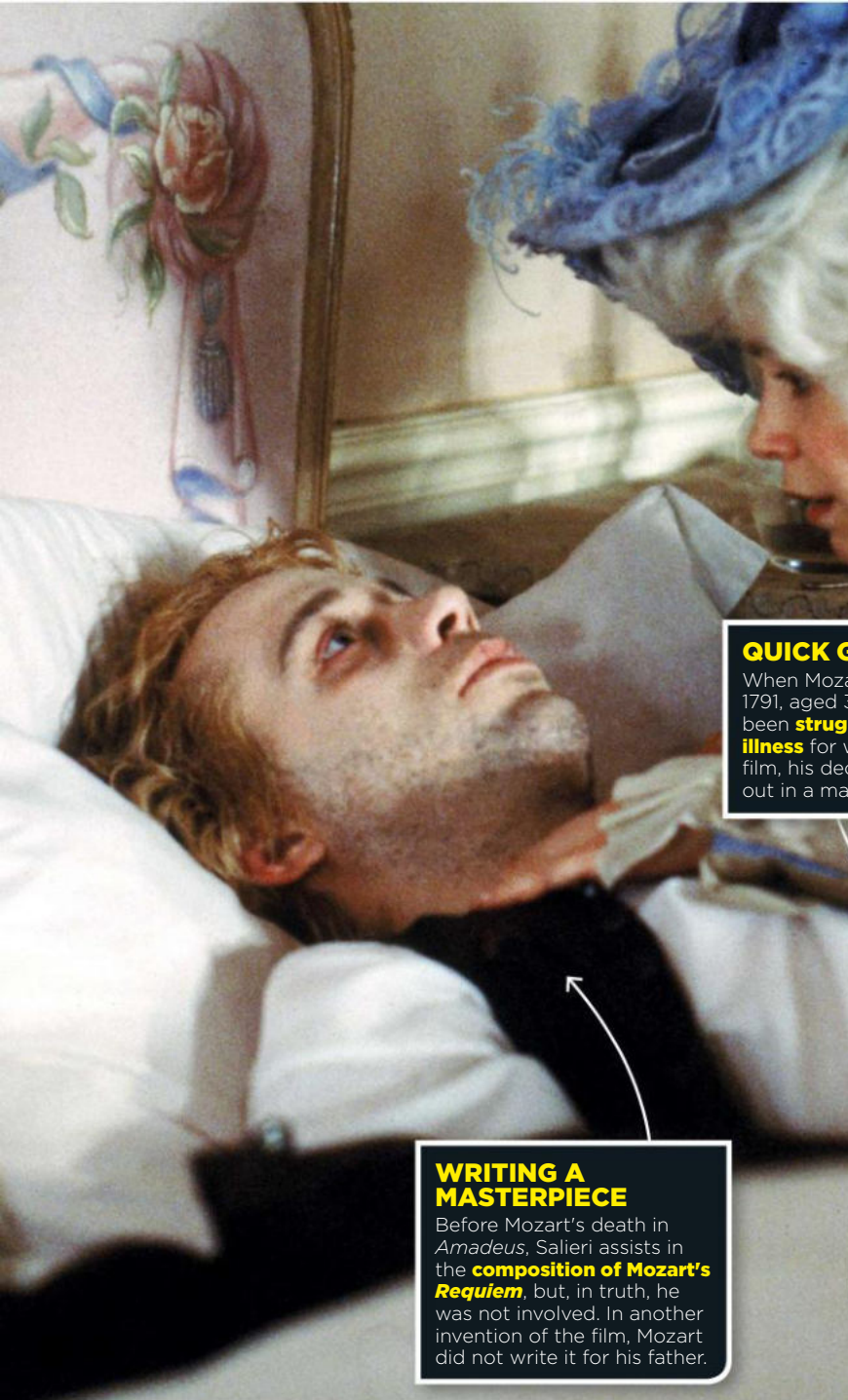
finding mainly low pay and occasionally humiliating circumstances. It was in the period after 1781, when Mozart defied his father and decided to live and work independently in Vienna, that his career flourished. In the space

of ten years, he found great success with the operas *The Abduction from Seraglio* (1782), *The Marriage of Figaro* (1786), *Don Giovanni* (1787) and *The Magic Flute* (1791). These were composed alongside

OPERA-TUNITIES

A scene from *Don Giovanni* – one of the operas that brought Mozart fame





“Mozart! Mozart, forgive your assassin. I confess, I killed you.”

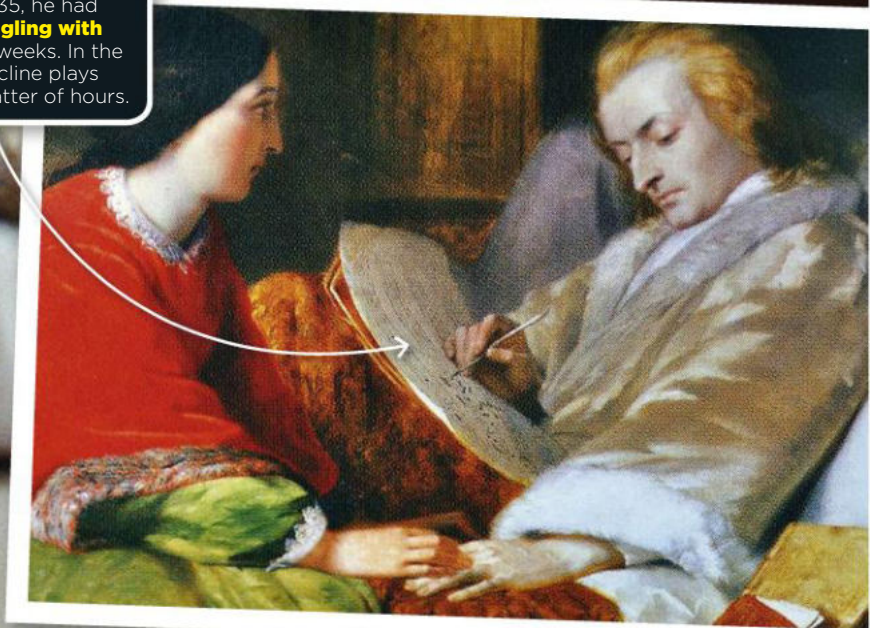
MAIN: Before Constanze Mozart (Elizabeth Berridge) discovers his body Mozart spends his last moments composing with Salieri from his bed
BELOW: Salieri doesn't feature in William James Grant's painting of the weak and ill Mozart writing his *Requiem*.

QUICK GOODBYE

When Mozart died in 1791, aged 35, he had been **struggling with illness** for weeks. In the film, his decline plays out in a matter of hours.

WRITING A MASTERPIECE

Before Mozart's death in *Amadeus*, Salieri assists in the **composition of Mozart's Requiem**, but, in truth, he was not involved. In another invention of the film, Mozart did not write it for his father.



his piano concertos, symphonies and chamber music, and together with his work as a performer and teacher, his success brought a high income. Mozart's money troubles were the result of excessive spending, and his mercurial temperament, rather than any malicious machinations against him. His death, at the age of 35, was not considered suspicious at the time as he had been ill for weeks with a fever. While it is true that he had a commoner's funeral, in 18th-century Vienna this was not unusual for a man of non-aristocratic standing. It certainly was not a mark of his downfall or ignominy, as implied by the film. At his death, Mozart was second in stature only to Salieri as Vienna's most prominent musician and composer.

The drama of *Amadeus* stems not from historical accuracies, but from our

contemporary knowledge that Mozart's music and reputation have survived for centuries – and continued to find new, enraptured audiences – while Salieri's name and work quickly faded. Mozart's secondary status during his own lifetime thus appears unjust and unwarranted, and he is invested with the role of the struggling artist and unappreciated genius. This may be shaky history, but the film has enough laughter, conflict, romance and tragedy to please any opera lover, except perhaps for Salieri himself, who undoubtedly would have told the tale in an altogether different key. 📍



WHAT DO YOU THINK?

Should films stick to facts or is there no problem with the extent of poetic license seen in *Amadeus*?

Email: editor@historyrevealed.com

Ones to watch: composers

Impromptu

(James Lapine, 1991)
Hugh Grant and Judy Davis star as Frédéric Chopin and George Sand in this colourful drama of their scandalous romance.

Immortal Beloved

(Bernard Rose, 1994)
With Gary Oldman in the lead, the film attempts to identify the unnamed woman at the heart of a passionate love letter from Ludwig van Beethoven.

Topsy-Turvy

(Mike Leigh, 1999)



Gilbert and Sullivan's *The Mikado* is the subject of Mike Leigh's *Topsy Turvy*

The story of the difficult relationship between Gilbert and Sullivan as they struggled to write and stage *The Mikado*.

Evita

Tom Symmons follows the real life of Eva Perón, whose poverty-to-politics story inspired the smash musical

Glamorous, passionate, charismatic and ruthlessly ambitious, Eva Perón, born María Eva Duarte on 7 May 1919, had all the qualities

needed to rise up and become an influential figure in her home country of Argentina. And Eva made quite the rise, starting life, as she did, in the depths of poverty and ending up the most powerful woman in the country, as its First Lady.

During her meteoric rise, she became a leading and incredibly beloved political figure. Ardent in her efforts to alleviate the biggest problems faced by the poor and to support the campaign for women's suffrage, she was considered a living saint by millions of Argentinians, who fondly called her 'Evita' (little Eva). She was not without her critics, however, who claimed she was driven by a callous desire to succeed.

Her dazzling life story, full of controversy and no small amount of sex appeal, became the subject of the epic musical hit, *Evita* (1996), adapted from the stage production by Andrew Lloyd Webber and Tim Rice. With a heartfelt performance by Madonna, the movie bagged many awards, and brought Eva's tale to a new generation.

BUMPY START

However bright her legacy, there was little in the way of glamour during Eva's upbringing. Her humble start began in the village of Los Toldos, some 200 miles west of the capital, Buenos Aires, as one of five children born to Juan Duarte and Juana Ibaguren. The couple never married and the children grew up in desperate poverty, which was made much worse after Eva's father lost his job.

Then, in 1926, Juan died in a car accident so the family moved to the town of Junin. The children were able to attend school while their mother repaired clothing – when she could get work – to make ends meet. Growing up,

UNION POWER

Shortly after her wedding, while she was still starring on the airwaves, Eva helped to set up a **union for radio employees**.



the young Eva had few friends, as her illegitimacy was scandalous.

Eva became fascinated with the movies, especially Hollywood, and dreamed of escaping her life of misfortune to become an actress in Buenos Aires. In the mid 1930s, when she was still a teenager, Eva moved to the capital having landed a small radio role.

The Great Depression had its claws in the city and opportunities were scarce, but Eva never lost her determination. After her radio contract came to an end, she found work with various theatre troupes and, in 1937, landed her first film role. She also started modelling.

In 1939, Eva set up her own radio entertainment business: the Company of the Theatre of the Air. The group produced radio programmes and, in 1943, she achieved a major success – a series in which she portrayed famous women from history, including Queen Elizabeth I and Catherine the Great.

Although Eva's rise has been linked to her relationships with increasingly influential men, by her early 20s she had escaped the shame of her impoverished

THE FACTS

Release date: 1996

Director:

Alan Parker

Cast:

Madonna,
Jonathan Pryce,
Antonio Banderas,
Jimmy Nail

“I am only a radio star with just one weekly show...”

MAIN: Wielding their personal identification cards, Buenos Aires women are off to vote, in 1951, for the first time

LEFT: Madonna broadcasts to the nation as Eva Perón in *Evita*

childhood. Her career was flourishing, she was wealthy and she lived in an upmarket neighbourhood.

THE WAY TO THE TOP

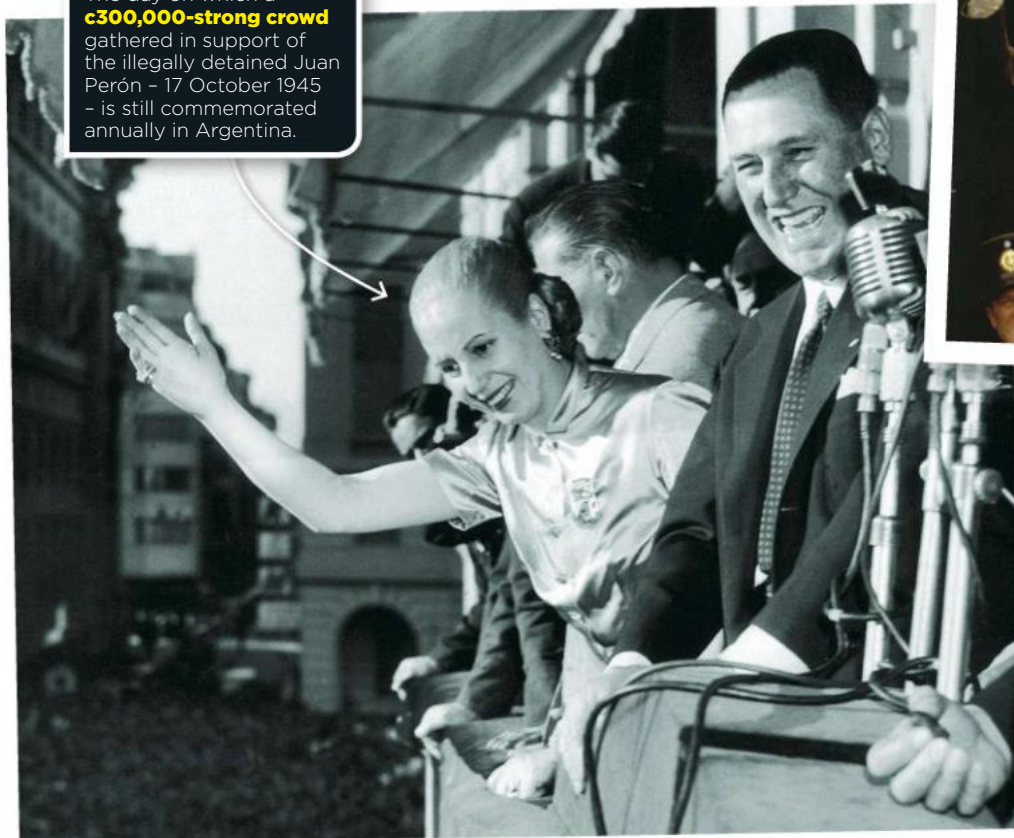
In 1944, Eva started a relationship with 48-year-old Army Colonel Juan Perón, one of the most powerful men in Argentina. After the military took control of the Argentinian government in 1943, Perón became Labour minister and distinguished himself as a champion of the working classes, who were known as the *descamisados*, or 'shirtless ones'. He encouraged the country's labourers to form unions, thereby giving them the

“Evita was considered a living saint by millions of Argentinians.”



LOYALTY DAY

The day on which a **c300,000-strong crowd** gathered in support of the illegally detained Juan Perón - 17 October 1945 - is still commemorated annually in Argentina.



**“Just listen to that!
The voice of
Argentina!
We are adored!
We are loved!”**

LEFT: The Peróns smile for the public on the fifth anniversary of the Perónist movement, in 1950

ABOVE: Madonna and Jonathan Pryce charm a crowd as the Perón power couple

MILLIONS IN MADRID

Evita's trip to Spain fell at a time when, because of its **Fascist government**, not many foreign dignitaries were visiting the country. This made Señora Perón's arrival all the more exciting, and some **3 million** people flocked to welcome her.



“People of Europe, I send you the rainbow of Argentina.”

ABOVE: On her ‘Rainbow Tour’ of Europe, Eva speaks to a massive Spanish crowd from the Royal Palace balcony in Madrid, June 1947

RIGHT: At home, the First Lady visits the children of the Eva Perón Foundation. One of the aims of her charity, launched in 1948, was to assist impoverished children



< freedom to organise and strike for better pay and working conditions. Already hugely popular with the masses, Juan Perón's connection to Eva – the actress of humble origin – boosted his populist image. On her radio show, Eva used her skills to promote her lover, highlighting their shared working-class roots to appeal to ordinary Argentinians.

UNSTOPPABLE PAIR

By 1945, Juan Perón's opponents in the administration feared his popularity was eclipsing that of the country's President, Edelmiro Julián Farrell. In an attempt to check his political rise, Perón was forced to resign and taken into custody. But hundreds of thousands of his loyal supporters took to the streets chanting ‘Perón!’, bringing the capital to a grinding halt and forcing his release.

A few days later, Eva's life changed dramatically when she married Juan in a small civil ceremony.

Encouraged by the demonstration following his arrest, Juan ran for president the next year. Eva campaigned with her husband across the country, and continued to use her radio show to deliver powerful speeches praising her husband's patriotism and desire for social justice. It was during her entry into politics that Eva Perón became Evita to her millions of admirers. Juan won the election in a landslide.

Eva embraced her role as First Lady, but developed a dual personality. As the

Eva shakes hands with General Franco in Madrid, 1947



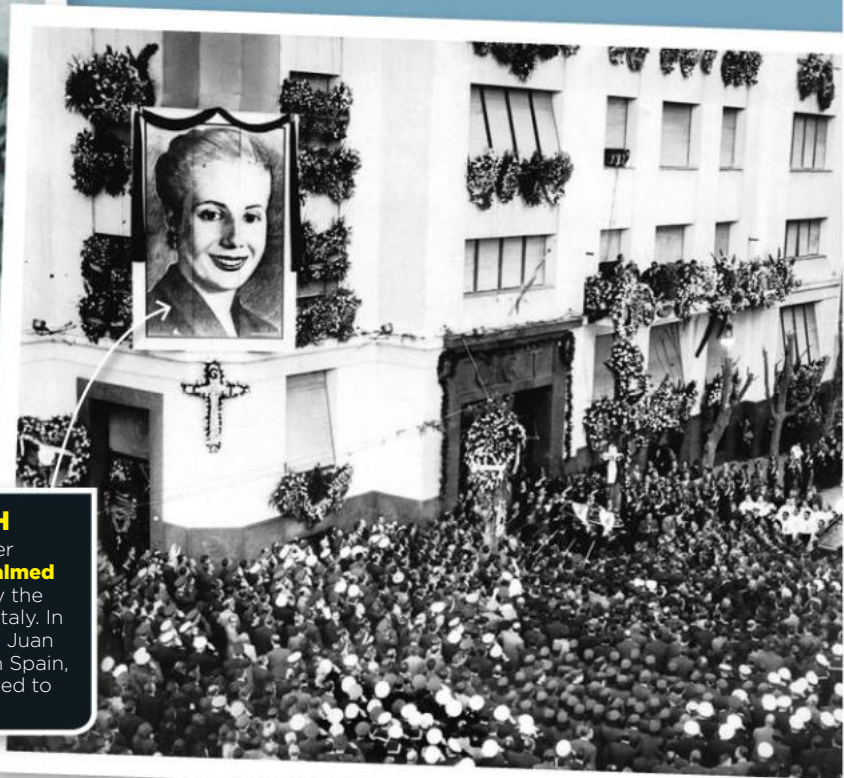
President's glamorous wife, she performed her ceremonial duties, but as Evita she unofficially ran the Ministries of Labour and Health, met face-to-face with the poor who were in need of help and delivered higher wages and greater social welfare benefits for the country's worst-off. To this end, Eva created a foundation in 1948, which was part-funded by ‘donations’ coerced from Argentina's wealthy elite. The foundation's lack of accounts, combined with the First Lady's penchant for expensive attire, led to suspicions of corruption, but the charity had many successes, including building new houses, schools and hospitals.



**“Don’t cry for me, Argentina.
The truth is I shall not leave
you. Though it may get
harder, for you to see me, I’m
Argentina, and always will be.”**

LEFT: Evita casts her vote in the general election from her hospital bed in November 1951. At this point, her cervical cancer is still a secret.

BELOW: When news of Evita’s passing reaches the masses, much of Argentina enters a period of mourning. Here, crowds gather to see her body at the General Workers Confederation building



BODY SNATCH

Three years after her death, Evita’s **embalmed body was stolen** by the army and flown to Italy. In 1971, it was given to Juan Perón, then living in Spain, before being returned to Argentina in 1974.

Eva also had a major impact on the lives of Argentinian women. After historic legislation was passed that gave women the vote, Eva created the Female Peronist Party, which had 500,000 members and was the country’s first large women’s party. The First Lady, however, courted controversy, when, on a ‘Rainbow Tour’ of Europe, she visited Spain, which was then under the rule of military dictator, General Franco. She was greeted by millions of people in Madrid, but her critics denounced her as a Fascist sympathiser.

Back in Argentina, the Perón administration was becoming increasingly authoritarian, and was attempting to silence dissent by sacking or imprisoning its opponents in the press or within academia.

POPULAR DEMAND

Nonetheless, by the 1951 election, the Peróns remained popular with the working classes. So much so, that, at a mass rally of 2 million workers, the crowd demanded that Eva run as Juan’s Vice President. But, under pressure from the country’s military and upper classes, who had long-feared the First Lady

wielded too much power, she declined the offer. At the same time, her health was rapidly deteriorating as she was suffering from cancer. Seriously ill and unable to stand, Eva made her last public appearance in June 1952, at her husband’s second inauguration, around the time she was given the official title of ‘Spiritual Leader of the Nation’. Not long after that, aged just 33, Eva passed away. Some 2 million Argentinians lined the streets of Buenos Aires for her funeral.

Her remarkable story makes for an energetic and entertaining film – a spectacle that captures a sense of the dramatic change that was tearing through the country. Historically, however, the movie’s representation of Evita is superficial. The plot focuses on her style, appearance and celebrity, rather than her considerable political achievements, which improved the lives of millions of Argentinians. 🗳️



WHAT DO YOU THINK?

Does *Evita* portray Eva Perón’s real impact?

Email: editor@historyrevealed.com

Ones to watch: political leading ladies

The Lady

(Luc Besson, 2011)

The moving story of Aung San Suu Kyi, the Nobel Peace Prize winner who fought for democracy and human rights in Myanmar.

Mo

(Philip Martin, 2010)

A BAFTA-winning film about MP Mo Mowlam, focussing on the Good Friday Agreement and her struggle with cancer.

The Iron Lady

(Phyllida Lloyd, 2011)

Depicting the life of



Michelle Yeoh stars as Aung San Suu Kyi in *The Lady*

Margaret Thatcher – the UK’s first female Prime Minister – this biopic features a masterly performance by Meryl Streep in the lead role.

**LEFT WING**

Perón is admired by young footballers at the President Perón Stadium in Buenos Aires



Coco before Chanel

This literal rags-to-riches story looks as beautiful and elegant as the fashion designer's own style, as **Mel Sherwood** reveals...

Quietly, with just the sound of birdsong and the rolling of a cart's wheels, two young sisters arrive at the Aubazine orphanage in central France in 1893. This is how Anne Fontaine's 2009 biopic *Coco Before Chanel*, starring Audrey Tautou, begins. One of the girls is Gabrielle Chanel, destined to become Coco, perhaps the 20th century's most celebrated fashion designer. But that is to come in her future. On this sombre day, the young Gabrielle is greeted by black-and-white-habited nuns, and ushered inside the abbey, a stone building of simple design and austere furnishings. A fitting location for the future fashion designer – who would become famous for her neutral colour palettes and simple, clean silhouettes – to grow up.

The orphanage may have been a key influence on Chanel's style, but she was greatly ashamed of her time there. As an adult, Chanel would refer to the nuns who raised her as 'aunts', in just one of the many euphemisms and mistruths she used to disguise her less-than-glamorous upbringing. Despite their time in an orphanage, these two Chanel girls, along with their brothers and another sister (who may have also grown up with the nuns), were not orphans. Though their mother had died at just 32 – after a decade on the road with Chanel's father, a travelling salesman, and six pregnancies – their father lived. Chanel, however, never saw him again.

MAKING CONNECTIONS

Anne Fontaine's movie rejoins Chanel's story again 15 years later. Now a young woman, she walks out from



behind a curtain in a *caf'conc*, a type of entertainment cafe that emerged in garrison towns at the turn of the 20th century. The two Chanel girls, led by Coco, belt out a ditty about a missing dog named 'Coco' (possibly the origin of her nickname). This particular *caf'conc* was in a town in central France, Moulins, where Gabrielle and her sister were working as seamstresses during the day and, as the movie would have it, entertaining military men by night.

As a seamstress, Chanel excelled. She had rigorous practical sewing training from her 'aunts' at the orphanage, but she also had a creative influence, from one of her actual aunts. Her father's sister, who young Gabrielle would visit each summer as a holiday from orphanage life, showed the girl how to

"A woman in love is helpless..."

MAIN: Audrey Tautou gives a wonderful performance as a headstrong and intelligent Gabrielle Chanel – later to become fashion icon, Coco

LEFT: In 1910, when this photo was taken, Chanel opened a boutique in Paris, which is still there today

BELOW: Chanel was at the forefront of high-class fashion for six decades



be creative with a needle and thread, adapting hats to suit her own style – a skill that would become the cornerstone of all her future success.

THE FACTS

Release date: 2009

Director:

Anne Fontaine

Cast:

Audrey Tautou,
Benoit Poelvoorde,
Alessandro Nivola,
Marie Gillain

LOVE AND PARIS

Frustrated with life as a seamstress, Chanel set her sights on a new challenge. After several failed solo vaudeville auditions in the nearby city of Vichy, which she probably saw as a stepping stone to Paris, Chanel was set to become a *gommeuse* – a dancer who wore a

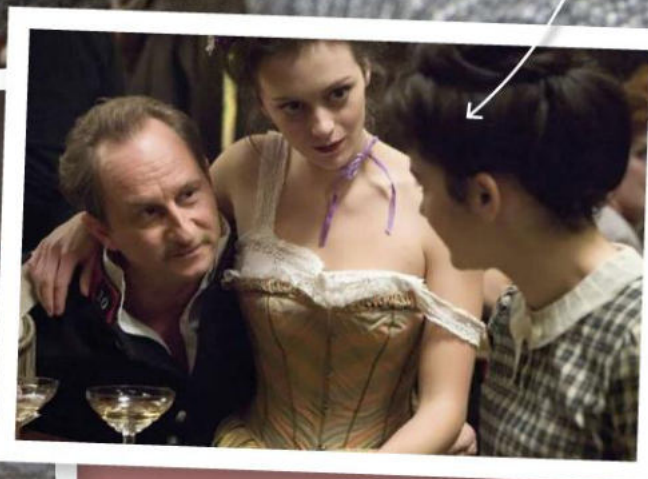
“Too many feathers. Too much make-up. Too much everything.”

OUT OF ORDER

In the film, Chanel meets Balsan after one of her shows at the cafe, when actually she may not have even started **singing in public** until after she had met him.

CHARACTER BLEND

Adrienne, presented in the movie as Chanel's sister, was in reality **Chanel's young aunt**, and not the girl she entered the orphanage with.



“Who has seen Coco? Oh Coco! Oh Coco!”

LEFT: Gabrielle Chanel (Audrey Tautou, left) was taught the first skills of her craft at an orphanage, alongside her sister Adrienne (played by Marie Gillain)

ABOVE: Benoît Poelvoorde's Étienne Balsan is intrigued when he first lays his eyes on Chanel in a cafe

TOUGH LOVE

In the film, **Boy is already engaged** to another when he meets Chanel, but the pair were actually together for nearly **eight years** before Boy made the business decision to get married.



“Oh mon chéri, successful women do not fall in love” – Coco Chanel

ABOVE: Chanel is photographed with her mastachioed English lover, Arthur Capel – known as ‘Boy’ – while on holiday on the beaches of Saint-Jean-de Luz, southern France, in 1917

RIGHT: In 1915, Chanel opened her third boutique in Biarritz, which thrived even during World War I. It is here that she supposedly comes up with her first fashion collection



heavily embellished and highly revealing costume. Before she got very far with this, however, a convention-defying plutocrat with a passion for race horses, named Étienne Balsan, invited her to become his mistress. At the age of 23, Chanel moved in with this Champagne-swilling libertine at his Compiègne home, ‘Royallieu’.

Here, Chanel entered the life of live-in mistress. She was his second such – he already had one *croquesse de diamante*, or ‘diamond scruncher’. Chanel struggled in this world. She began to loath people who did not work, and often let others dominate conversation. She did, however, learn to indulge in lazy mornings – often reading in her pyjamas until noon – and, either at Balsan’s request or shrewdly sensing that it was the way to make herself alluring to him, to love and understand horses.

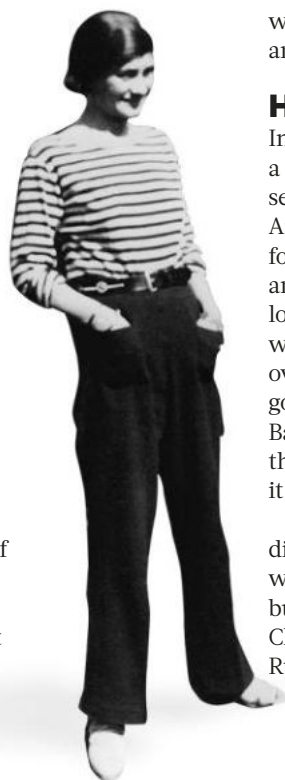
With little else to do, she also began to develop her sense of style, and to step outside of the fashion norm. At the time, the *à la mode* look for women included a corset for a tiny waist, a

bustle for an enhanced rear, as well as ostentatious accessories. In time, Chanel would do her best to bring to an end to such abundant styles. She hated corsets, saw too much embellishment as garish, and the enormous hats of the day as distracting. For her, simplistic was more beautiful, and concealing the silhouette was even more alluring than revealing it. These are now fundamental laws of fashion but, at the time, they were revolutionary.

At Royallieu, Chanel donned jodphurs for horse riding while going sans-corset most of the time, and her daring taste soon piqued the interest of Balsan’s female friends. One such character was Emilienne d’Alençon, Balsan’s other live-in lover. She was among the first to be taken with Chanel’s modest straw boater hats, and word soon spread among the fashionable gossips of the haut monde of Balsan’s talented ‘little friend’.

As hints of possible success arose, so Chanel’s desire to work grew. In 1908, at the age of 25, she broached with Balsan

Coco Chanel championed minimalist fashion styles



the idea of opening a hat shop. After being initially reluctant, he relented, and offered her his Parisian bachelor pad to work from. But before she could begin, another great passion developed.

HE’S JUST A BOY

In 1909, Balsan whisked Chanel away for a trip to the Pyrenees, where she met a self-made English businessman named Arthur ‘Boy’ Capel. He was making a fortune in coal, was a famed polo player and quite the charmer. He was also the love of Chanel’s life. Their initial affair was intense and, when the holiday was over, Chanel decided to leave Balsan and go home with Boy. She wrote a note for Balsan and left him, waiting for Boy at the train station. She was uninvited but, it seems, very welcome.

Their romance continued to grow, as did Chanel’s business. Living in Paris with Boy, and with both financial and business assistance from her lover, Chanel opened a millinery boutique on Rue Cambon in Paris in 1910, where the



HIDDEN DESIGNER

Chanel did indeed watch her collection launches from these mirrored stairs. Perching **on the fifth step**, she could see her models and the audience, but **she was hidden from view**.

fashion house still has a boutique to this day. A second boutique followed in the seaside resort of Deauville in 1913, where they sold not just hats and accessories, but also sportswear and revolutionary jersey garments to the holiday shoppers.

Even through World War I, her fashion enterprise flourished. Chanel opened a couture house in Biarritz, employing some 60 women, where she embraced the austere fashions that wartime encouraged. Rather than expensive textiles, she favoured simple jersey – it was a cheap and efficient material, and she knew how to make spectacular garments out of it. Despite the time of conflict, this fledgling fashion house was selling dresses with 7,000-franc price tags, about £1,500 today.

THE END OF THE AFFAIR

Though Boy gave Chanel some of the happiest years of her life, theirs was far from an idyllic relationship. Boy had a wandering eye and, most heartbreakingly of all for Chanel, he married another not for love, but as a business decision. Despite such setbacks, their passion continued. It was a tragedy that truly ended the love affair: he was killed in a car accident in 1919. Chanel couldn't attend the funeral because she was the mistress, but she did visit the site of the crash, where she broke down in tears on the road.

By the time Boy passed away, Chanel was set. She had already paid back much of the investment he had put up and,

between her three locations, she was selling sportswear, blazers, dresses, accessories and, of course, her hats.

In the final moments of the movie, Chanel sits on the stairs in her Parisian boutique during a collection launch. Models surround her, as the sound of applause fills the room. She is the picture of elegance: Coco has become Chanel. It appears to be shortly after Boy's death, as though her grief catapulted her into a frenzy of her best work. But, in reality, she did not suddenly become an icon and release an occasion-wear collection overnight. As with many elements of her rise, Chanel's success developed gradually, and more slowly, certainly, than the film reflects. While significant liberties are taken with the chronology of events, *Coco Before Chanel* is distilled with the truths of the heroine's character. Tautou brings Coco's bravery, bluffs and charm to the fore. And it is not only Tautou's portrayal that fits, but the film's cinematographic style echoes the Chanel look: it is clean, elegant and beautifully made.



WHAT DO YOU THINK?

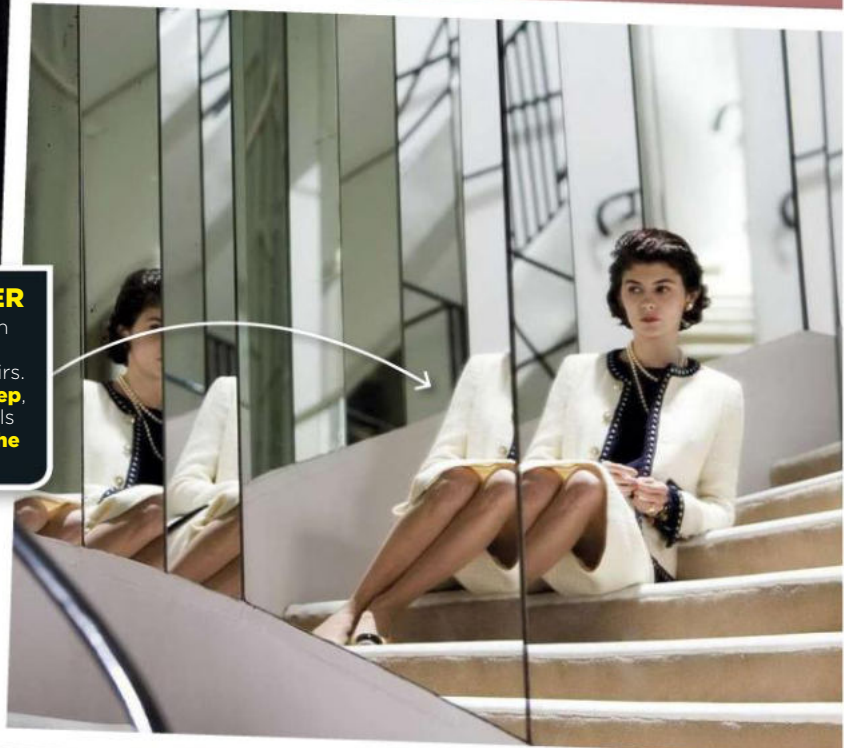
What film based on true historical events should be the next 'Reel Story'?

Email: editor@historyrevealed.com

“I always knew I'd be no one's wife. Not even yours (Boy). It's just that sometimes, I forget”

LEFT: Chanel was responsible for a number of innovative fashion trends in the early 20th century, including the 'little black dress', which was designed in the 1920s

BELOW: At the denouement of *Coco Before Chanel*, the now-successful Chanel watches the launch of a collection from the steps of her boutique



Ones to watch: fashion icons

Dior and I (2014)

This enlightening documentary offers a rare glimpse inside the world of Christian Dior, and considers the history of the fashion house as a new creative designer takes the reins.

Diana Vreeland: The Eye Has to Travel (2011)

Another documentary, this time on the life of fashion journalist, Diana Vreeland, who worked for 26 years at *Harpers Bazaar*, and as *Vogue's* Editor-in-Chief for eight.



Christian Dior's creative designer, Raf Simons

McQueen and I (2011)

A profile of designer Alexander McQueen, who rose from humble origins to fashion super-stardom through the 1990s.

SIT AND STAIR

Coco Chanel watches the audience and models in secret from her favourite step

GETTY



300: the Battle of Thermopylae

With blood, abs and slow-mo, this swords-and-sandals romp seems to leave historical accuracy at the door – but does it really? asks **Jonny Wilkes**

The Battle of Thermopylae is seconds away, and Zack Snyder's *300* prepares to explode into an hour of unapologetically blood-splattered action.

A phalanx of 300 lone warriors from the Greek military state of Sparta faces hundreds of thousands of soldiers from every corner of the mighty Persian Empire, but, having trained for war their entire lives, they are unfazed by the impossible odds. Before shields clatter and spears are thrust, a Persian messenger offers a final chance to surrender. "Spartans!" he yells, "Lay down your weapons." But the Spartan King Leonidas (played with gusto by Gerard Butler) takes pleasure in his retort: "Persians! Come and get them."

It is a line that sounds like it could only have been written for an action movie and yet that dialogue is about 2,500 years old. The real Leonidas sent that response to the Persian King Xerxes before battle was joined in 480 BC. That serves to show the surprising thing about *300*. As an ostentatious, stylised blockbuster, there is much that can be dismissed as historically suspicious or the victim of overly artistic license, but at its heart, the movie understands just how cinematic the actual battle was – and that Leonidas and his 300 Spartans were tailor-made to be action stars and, as it turned out, martyrs.

LIVE AND BREATHE WAR

In 480 BC, the Persian Empire was already the largest power base the world had seen, but Xerxes greedily eyed the independent city states that formed Greece as a stepping stone to expand into Europe. His father, Darius, attempted to invade a decade earlier but had been repelled at the Battle of Marathon, so Xerxes, determined not to make the

same mistakes, spent years preparing a gargantuan army and fleet. Putting their usual rivalries aside, the Greeks united against this threat and knew their best chance of success was to fight on two fronts. At sea, they would block the Persians at the Straits of Artemisium, while on land, the ideal ground to defend was Thermopylae, or 'Hot Gates' (named after the hot springs there). With water to the east and mountains to the west, it was a narrow coastal track in northern Greece, which the Persian army would have to march through if they wanted to reach the southern states.

The Spartans, who lived and breathed war, were the natural choice to lead the land force. They were an elite fighting force of highly disciplined and seemingly fearless warriors, skilled with a number of weapons (except the bow, which they considered the weapon of cowards). From birth – where they are inspected for physical faults and discarded on a hilltop if deemed weak – the life of a man in Sparta was consumed by the army. While *helots* ('slaves') carried out everyday jobs such as farming, Spartans were in constant, brutal military training and drilled to believe that the greatest glory they could achieve was to die in battle. Such was Sparta's readiness for war, the city had two kings so that one could maintain law and order at home while the other led the army.

Yet something could hold them back: their own rules. When they were needed at the Hot Gates, Spartans were celebrating not only the festival of



START YOUNG

Leonidas had to undergo the **Spartan ritual of 'agoge'** – at the age of seven, boys were entered into a military boot camp where they learned to fight, steal and tolerate pain. They could only enter manhood by **killing a slave**.

THE FACTS

Release date: 2006

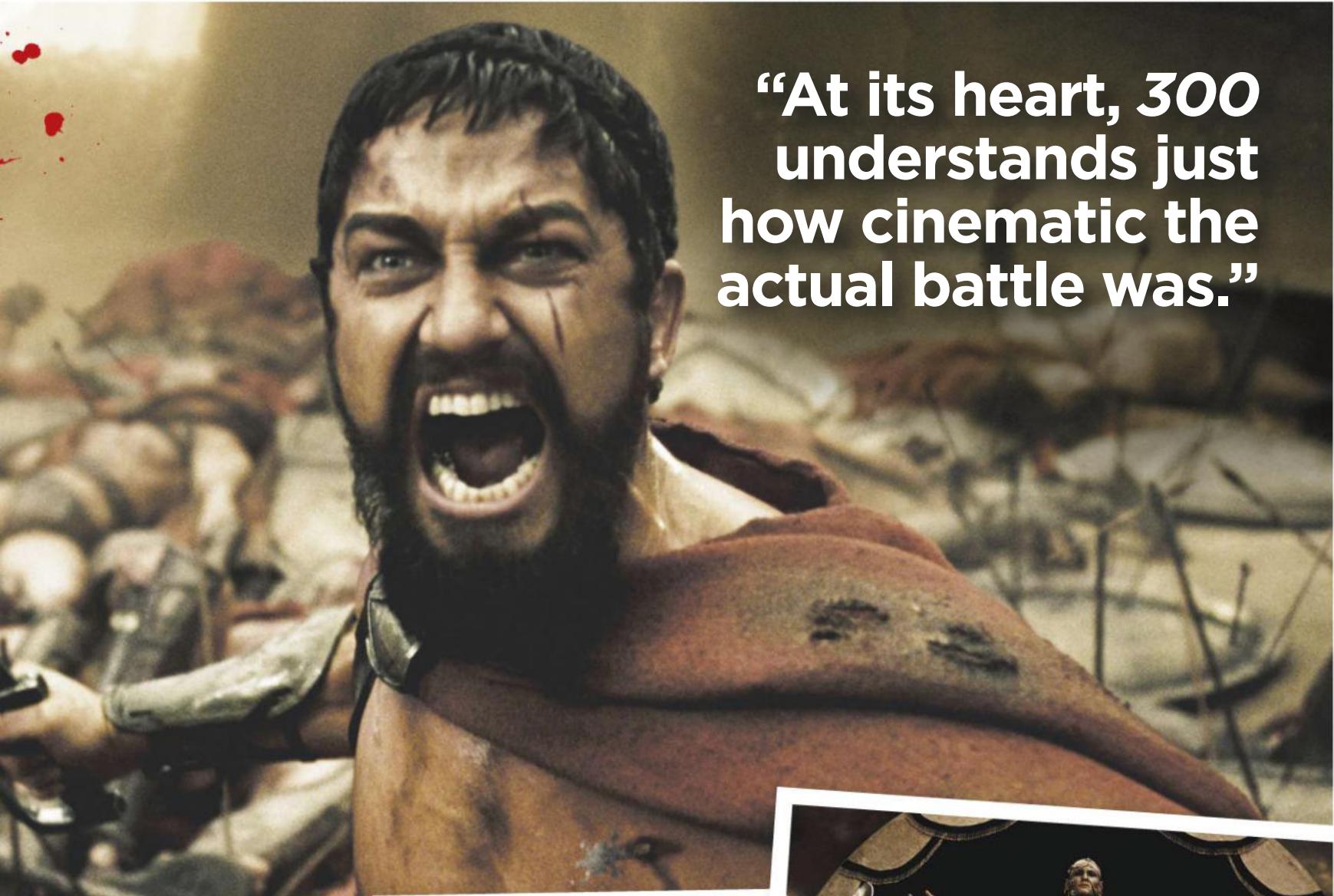
Director:

Zack Snyder

Cast:

Gerard Butler,
Lena Headey,
David Wenham,
Rodrigo Santoro,
Dominic West,
Michael Fassbender

Carnea but the Olympics too, so were doubly forbidden by Spartan law from marching to war. It was only the urgency of the situation that permitted the warrior King Leonidas to take 300 men of the royal bodyguard as an advance party. Unlike in the movie, this was done with the blessing of the *'ephors'* – five of the most influential men in Sparta. The aim was to hold the Persians long enough for the main army to arrive after the Carnea, but Leonidas knew it was a suicide mission. He had heard a prophecy claiming that a Spartan king would die before the Persians were defeated and, to ensure the safety of



“At its heart, 300 understands just how cinematic the actual battle was.”

“Spartans, ready your breakfast and eat hearty. For tonight, we dine in hell.”

MAIN: Gerard Butler's Leonidas gives a “long and loud” roar
LEFT: This statue of Leonidas has stood in former Spartan lands since it was erected in 1968

Spartan bloodlines, he insisted that only men with living sons be among the 300 soldiers, or ‘hoplites’.

SHOW NO FEAR

That is not to say the Spartans faced the might of Persia alone – a common misconception – as they were joined by men from all over Greece, as well as their ranks being boosted by helots. In all, some 7,000 men reached the Hot Gates, but this was still dwarfed by the invading enemy. The Greek historian Herodotus claimed the Persians numbered over 2 million and, while >



XERXES V NATURE

According to legend, Xerxes ordered a bridge over the strait of Hellespont (now the Dardanelles) to be built out of barges **to allow his army to enter Greece**. When a storm wrecked the bridge, he had the water whipped.



“You have many slaves, Xerxes, but few warriors. It won’t be long before they fear my spears more than your whips.”

LEFT: A fifth-century BC relief of Xerxes in the Persian capital of Persepolis, in Iran
ABOVE: In 300, Xerxes (Rodrigo Santoro) is depicted as a nine-feet tall god-King

ANCIENT DOG-TAGS

Before going into battle, every Spartan warrior would carve their unique mark at each end of a stick, which they then broke. They **kept one half somewhere on their body** while the other was in their pack back at camp, so, if they were killed, their body could be identified easily.

GREEK TRAITOR

Not the deformed Spartan of the movie, Ephialtes of Trachis helped Xerxes in the hope of a reward but as the Persian invasion failed, he never got it. Today, **his name means 'nightmare'** in Greece.

“A thousand nations of the Persian Empire will descend upon you. Our arrows will blot out the Sun.”

“Then we will fight in the shade.”

ABOVE: The Persian army – which the Greek historian Herodotus claimed was 2 million-strong – was held by 7,000 Greeks for two days of battle

RIGHT: Andrew Tiernan as the traitor Ephialtes



modern estimates put the total much lower at around 200,000, this was more than enough to trample any Greek force. This was probably why Xerxes did not attack right away, assuming the Greeks would lose heart at the sight of his armies and retreat. When he sent a spy, however, he was shocked to learn that the Spartans were wrestling, combing their hair and showing no signs of concern whatsoever. Such attitudes were standard Spartan behaviour; it was vital to show no fear. As one legend goes, when the Spartans were warned that the Persian arrows would be so numerous that they would block out the Sun, one Spartan replied with another cinematic zinger: “So much the better... then we shall fight our battle in the shade.”

After five exacerbating days of waiting, Xerxes gave the signal to attack. As the Greeks predicted, Persia's superior numbers meant nothing in the Hot

Gates. Wave after wave of Persian troops smashed against the Greek phalanx – a shield wall that spanned the pass – and broke. As the Spartans had longer spears, stronger shields and, crucially, bronze body armour (they certainly weren't the topless, loincloth-clad warriors of 300), they could jab and thrust in meticulously trained manoeuvres. So many Persians were cut down that Xerxes, watching from a throne on a nearby hillside, couldn't keep his calm and composure. He made a rash move. All 10,000 of his elite troops, the Immortals, were sent in on the first day, allowing the Greeks to pick off the best Persia had to offer before fatigue set in. For the rest of that day, the Spartans – as said in the movie – put the name of the Immortals to the test.

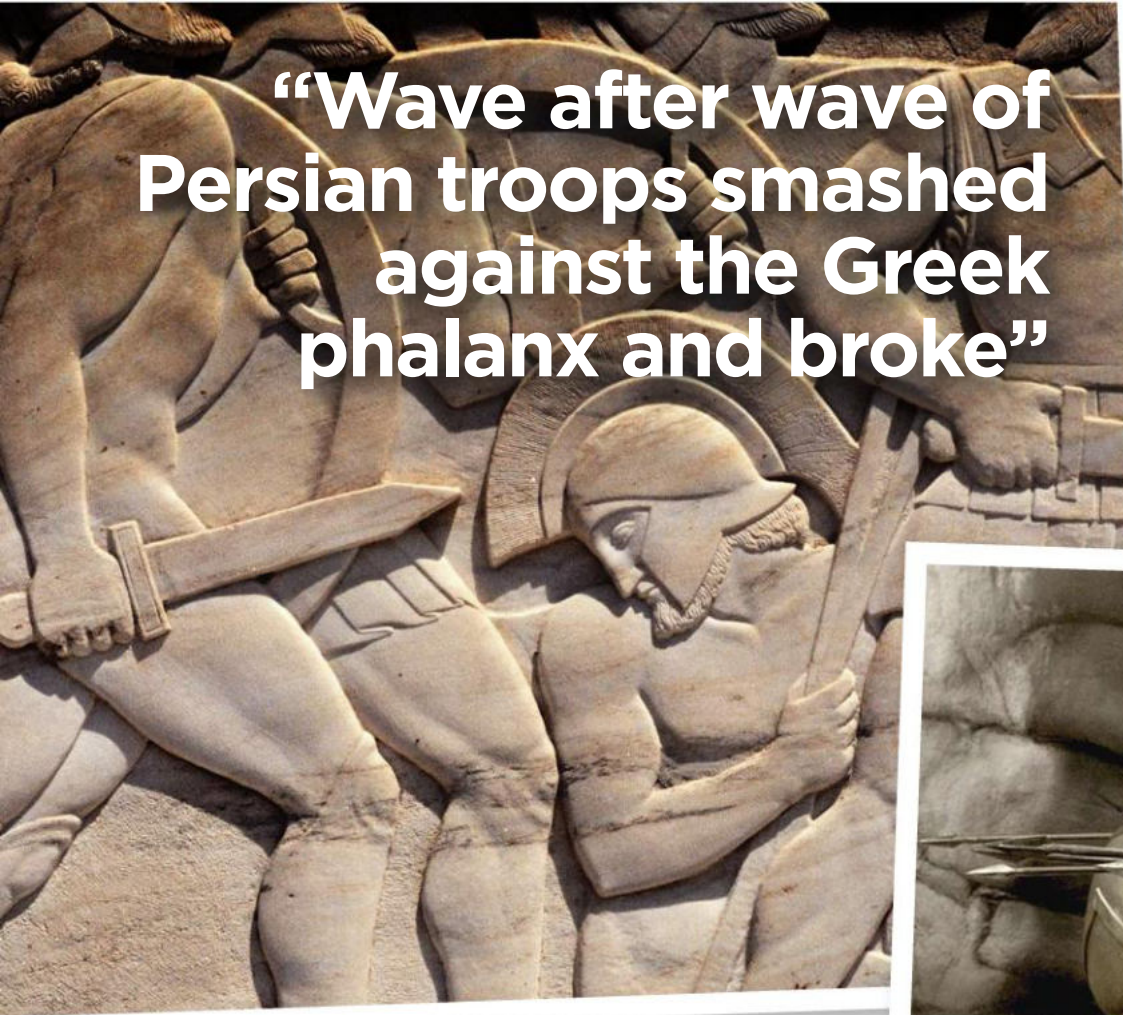
The second day went no better, as the Greeks could rotate the phalanx to

stop getting tired. This is when, in 300, Xerxes desperately sends increasingly fantastical men and creatures, from magicians to war rhinos – which they had in real life as much as they would have had laser guns or Sherman tanks – into battle. Just as the real Xerxes grew desperate, however, the destiny of the battle shifted. In the hope of getting rich, a Greek by the name of Ephialtes, who wasn't a hunchbacked former Spartan as the movie suggests, told the Persians of a small mountain path that would let them outflank the Greeks.

NEVER SURRENDER

Leonidas had positioned a unit of men on this path days before but, on seeing the advancing Immortals, they swiftly retreated. Knowing that the end was imminent, Leonidas ordered the

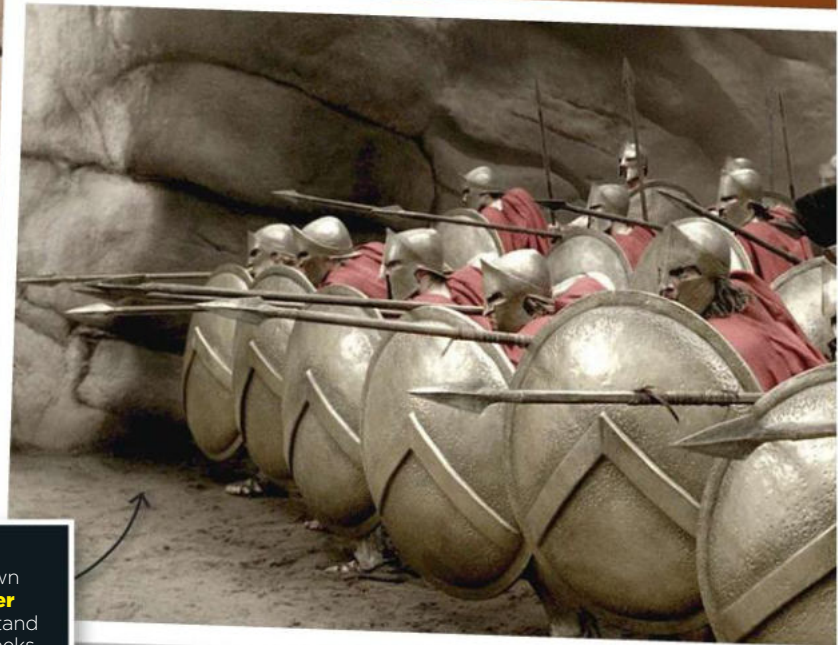
“Wave after wave of Persian troops smashed against the Greek phalanx and broke”



“Spartans! Lay down your weapons.”

“Persians! Come and get them.”

LEFT: It is thought that the phalanx originated in Sparta. This carving of the Battle of Thermopylae gives an idea of how closely packed the formation is
BELOW: As the Hot Gates were narrow, the Greek phalanx reached across the whole pass – forming an impenetrable barrier against the massive Persian force



withdrawal of the bulk of the Greeks, saying the Spartans would stay behind as a rear-guard. It was both a rational and irrational call – by staying, the Spartans could make sure the rest of the Greeks lived to fight another day, but Leonidas was also driven by Spartan nature not to surrender or retreat. His Spartans were joined in this last stand by 700 oft-overlooked Thespians and 400 Thebans.

Abandoning the phalanx, the Spartans and company stormed the Persians so they could take as many as they could with them. Their fighting was fierce, and it is said that thousands of Persians died, including two of Xerxes’ brothers, yet the tall and strong Leonidas was also killed. With victory now certain, Xerxes ordered relentless volley after volley of arrows and the remaining Greeks were completely eradicated.

In the short term, it was a hugely damaging defeat for the Greeks, as Xerxes stormed through to Athens, which had been evacuated, and razed it to the ground. If it were not for the betrayal of Ephialtes, the Spartans could have spearheaded one of the most extraordinary victories in military history but instead, their king was dead and his head cut off. And the legacy of a civilisation renowned for its military prowess became forevermore linked to a total defeat. The tale of the courage and commitment of the 300 Spartans,

THE HOT SPOT

The pass at Thermopylae, known as the Hot Gates, saw **two other ancient battles** after the last stand of the Spartans – when the Greeks fought Gallic and Roman armies in 279 BC and 191 BC respectively.

however, started to be told around Greece, giving warriors strength as the fight against Persia continued. Not long afterwards, the Greek navy won at Salamis and, the following year, the Persian invasion was crushed once and for all at the Battle of Plataea – with the full Spartan army at the vanguard.

That is where *300* ends. Like Frank Miller’s graphic novel on which it is based, the movie never compromises on action for historical pedantry, and nor should it. It is a romping, beautifully shot and thrilling watch; to be enjoyed as an action-packed adventure, not for its accuracy. Yet, amidst the oiled torsos and excellently choreographed fighting, it will still come as a pleasant surprise at how much of the over-the-top plot is grounded in the ancient accounts of bold Leonidas and his brave 300. 🕒



WHAT DO YOU THINK?

Is this the greatest last stand in history? What other battles rival that of the 300 Spartans?

Email: editor@historyrevealed.com

Ones to watch: Ancient Greece

Jason and the Argonauts

(Don Chaffey, 1963)

With iconic stop-motion animation from Ray Harryhausen, the Ancient Greek myth of Jason’s quest for the Golden Fleece is brought to life in this classic adventure.

Troy

(Wolfgang Petersen, 2004)

Swords, sandals, stars and set-pieces abound as Brad Pitt plays the hero Achilles, who seeks immortal glory in the siege of Troy against Eric Bana’s Hector.

300: Rise of an Empire

(Noam Murro, 2014)

Taking in the immediate



Will Achilles (Brad Pitt) be brought to heel in *Troy*?

aftermath of the events of *300*, the equally bloody and stylised sequel focuses on the Athenian hero Themistokles (Sullivan Stapleton) as he leads the Greeks into naval battle at Salamis.

Tombstone

Jonny Wilkes explains why the legendary shoot-out at the OK Corral was not the simple good-vs-bad clash that the 1993 film suggests

The bustling new town of Tombstone, Arizona, was flooded with the sounds of gunfire for just 30 seconds on 26 October 1881 – but the cracks of the 30 shots fired would echo through history as one of the Old West's most iconic moments.

The shoot-out at the OK Corral – between five members of the outlaw band known as the Cowboys, three of whom died, and the lawmen Wyatt Earp, his brothers Virgil and Morgan, and Doc Holliday – has been immortalised in several films, most famously *Tombstone* (1993). In nearly all depictions of the shoot-out – including the daily re-enactment staged to delight tourists in the town today – the Earps are the noble enforcers of law and order, while the Cowboys are violent thieves and murderers who get what they deserve. The truth of the OK Corral gunfight, however, is far more complex.

CLASH WITH COWBOYS

The opening narration of *Tombstone* introduces the Cowboys, a ruthless brotherhood of cattle-rustlers and killers who can be identified by their red sashes. The Cowboys did exist – they were thought to number more than 200 – but they were not the organised band portrayed in the film. Rather, they worked in small groups to commit petty crimes, and there is no evidence that they wore red sashes.

Wyatt, Virgil, Morgan, James and Warren Earp (the latter two don't feature in *Tombstone* and took no part in the gunfight) moved to the silver-mining community around 1879 seeking fortune. They were soon joined by John Henry 'Doc' Holliday, who hoped that the warm weather would help ease the tuberculosis from which he suffered.

For two years, the Earp brothers habitually clashed with the Cowboys. When Virgil was made town marshall in June 1881, tensions between the Earps

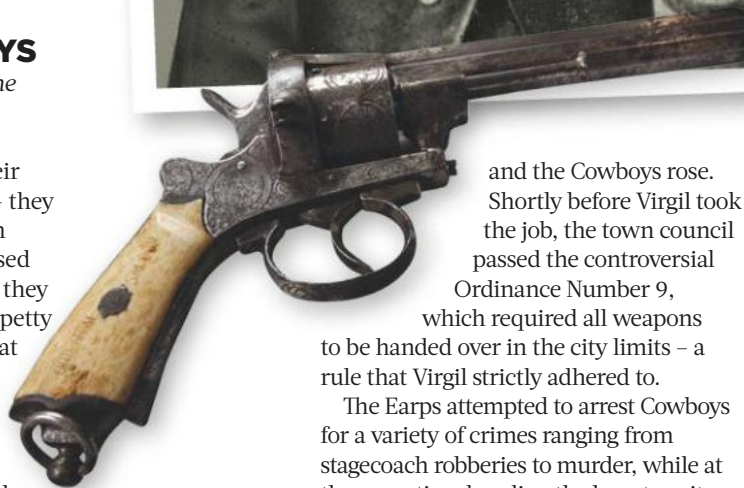


DOWN TO EARP

In the film, when Wyatt Earp first arrives at Tombstone he is insistent that he wants no job in law enforcement. The real Wyatt applied for several jobs, including as a **shotgun guard on stagecoaches**, and was deputy sheriff of Tombstone a year before the gunfight.

"I was only ever mixed up in one shooting – just one. But a man lost his life, and I took it. You don't know how that feels – and believe me, boy, you don't ever want to know."

MAIN: Doc Holliday (Val Kilmer), Virgil (Sam Elliott), Morgan (Bill Paxton) and Wyatt Earp (Kurt Russell)
LEFT: Wyatt, photographed c1883, and the pistol that he kept in Tombstone's Oriental Saloon



and the Cowboys rose. Shortly before Virgil took the job, the town council passed the controversial Ordinance Number 9,

which required all weapons to be handed over in the city limits – a rule that Virgil strictly adhered to.

The Earps attempted to arrest Cowboys for a variety of crimes ranging from stagecoach robberies to murder, while at the same time bending the laws to suit their own business interests in town. Both sides were culpable of dodgy dealings and illegal behaviour, but the Earps' image has been protected – mainly because they were the ones wearing the tin stars of law enforcement. Wyatt, in contrast with his reputation as the legendary lawman of Tombstone, had previously been a gambler, saloon owner and pimp as well as a law enforcer in other towns,

THE FACTS

Release date: 1993

Director:

George P Cosmatos

Cast:

Kurt Russell, Val

Kilmer, Sam Elliott,

Powers Boothe,

Michael Biehn, Bill

Paxton, Dana Delany

and was cultivating similar opportunities in Tombstone. He was also at loggerheads with Cochise County Sheriff Johnny Behan over a woman, Josephine Marcus, despite being married himself.

30 SECONDS, THREE DEAD

At around 3pm on 26 October 1881, the tension boiled over. That morning, Virgil and Wyatt had each pistol-whipped a Cowboy in the face of threats to their lives, notably from another Cowboy, Ike Clanton. By the afternoon, Virgil was concerned that the Cowboys in

THE COWBOYS' REVENGE

In *Tombstone*, the retaliatory attacks on Virgil and Morgan by the Cowboys occur immediately after the shoot-out, but Virgil was actually ambushed **two months after the gunfight** at the OK Corral and Morgan was killed in March 1882.

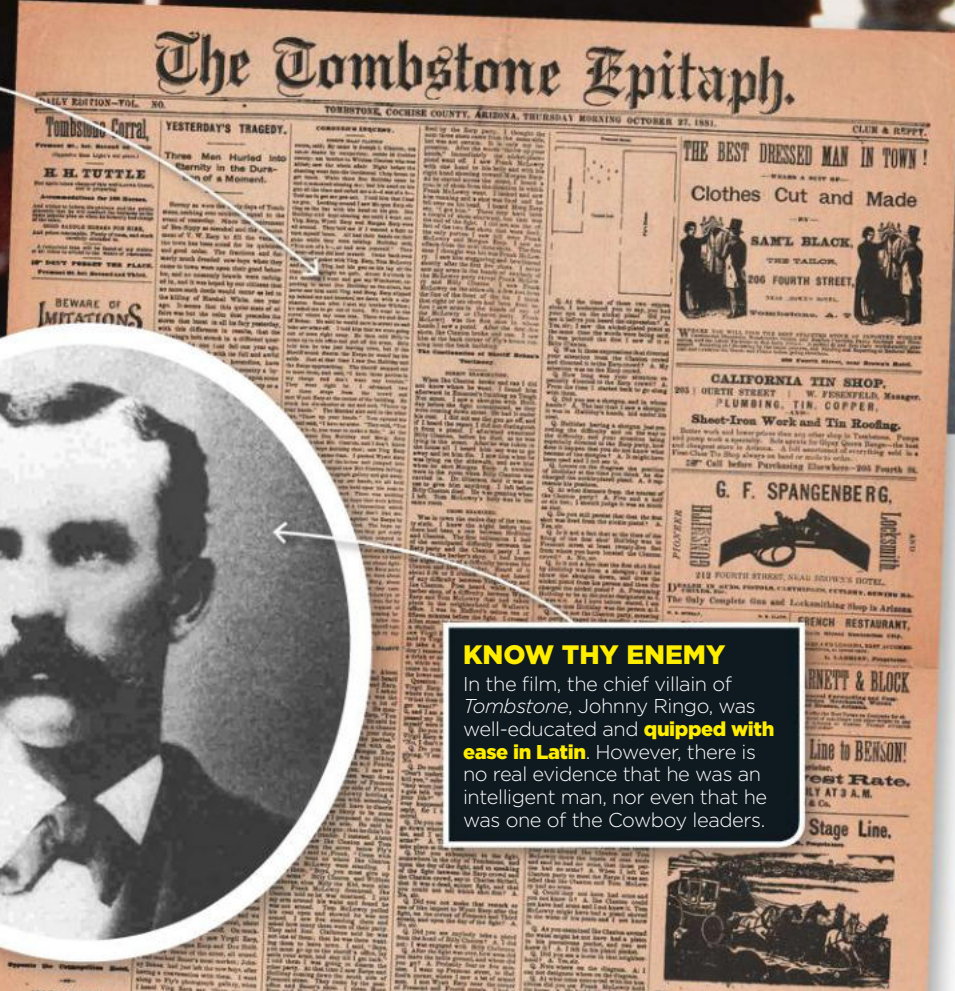
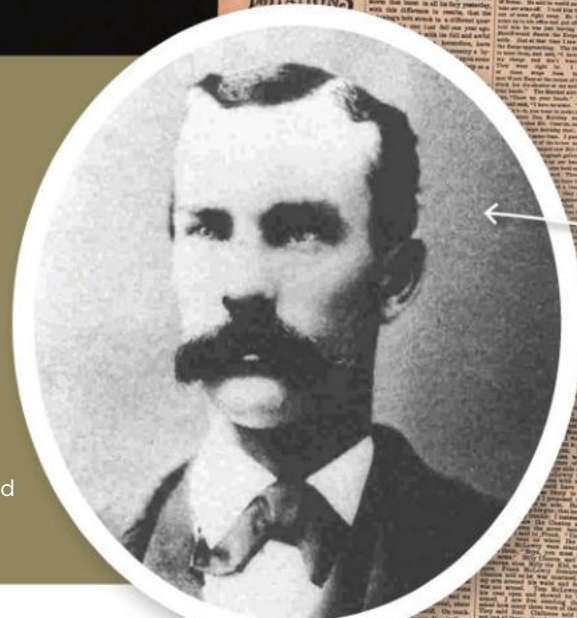
“Wyatt, rather than being a legendary lawman, had been a gambler, saloon owner and pimp.”

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

The two newspapers in Tombstone engaged in a war of words in the aftermath of the gunfight. *The Tombstone Epitaph* **took the side of the Earps** – its editor, John Clum, supported Virgil's actions as law enforcer – while *The Nugget's* version of events was wildly different, being more sympathetic to the Cowboys.

“You tell 'em I'm coming, and hell's coming with me, you hear? Hell's coming with me!”

RIGHT: The only known photograph of Cowboy Johnny Ringo
FAR RIGHT: The front page of *The Tombstone Epitaph* the day after the shooting. It writes: “The Marshal was entirely justified in his efforts to disarm these men, and that being fired upon they had to defend themselves, which they did most bravely.”



KNOW THY ENEMY

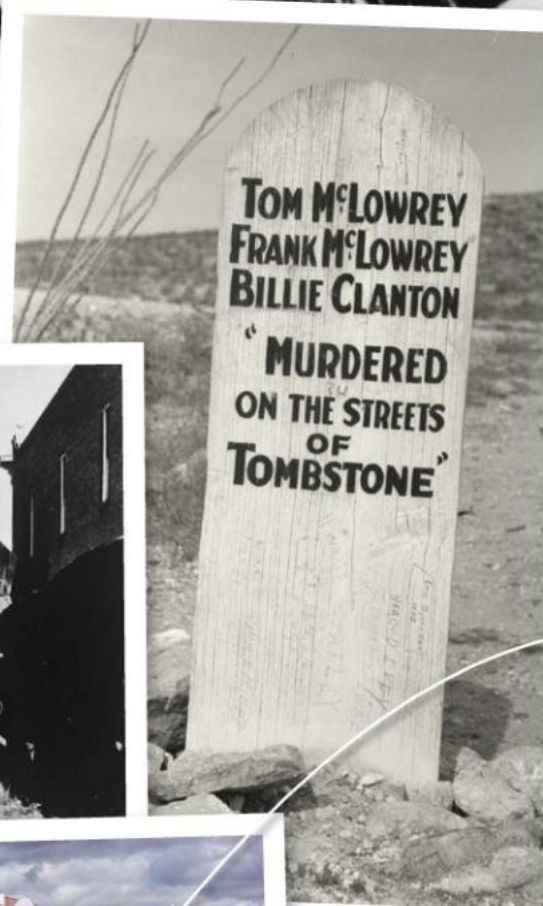
In the film, the chief villain of *Tombstone*, Johnny Ringo, was well-educated and **quipped with ease in Latin**. However, there is no real evidence that he was an intelligent man, nor even that he was one of the Cowboy leaders.

PUBLIC DISPLAY

The citizens of Tombstone could observe the **bodies of the three dead Cowboys** when they went on show in the window of Ritter and Ream Undertakers.

“The fighting’s commenced. Get to fighting or get away”

MAIN: The bodies of (left to right) Tom McLaury, Frank McLaury and Billy Clanton before their burial
 RIGHT: The gunfight didn’t actually take place at the OK Corral but on a lot beside Fly’s Photographic Studio
 FAR RIGHT: The dead were buried in Tombstone’s Boot Hill Cemetery. Some 2,000 people gathered to watch the funeral procession



PIECE OF HISTORY
 With the streets of Tombstone restored to look like the Old West, the town is a must for tourists

from what happened at the OK Corral, but from subsequent events. The Earp brothers

and Doc were arrested for murdering the three men and it was only after a month-long hearing – during which Wyatt and Doc spent 16 nights in jail – that they were cleared.

Late on the evening of 28 December 1881, Virgil was ambushed on a Tombstone street by shooters hiding in a nearby building. He lost the use of his arm, but his assailants escaped arrest even though he was able to identify them. Nearly three months later Morgan was shot in the back and killed while playing billiards. When the perpetrators

town hadn’t given up their firearms, so he collected a shotgun and rounded up Wyatt, Morgan and Doc, now all deputised as lawmen. Together they walked to the small lot near the OK Corral to confront and disarm Ike and Billy Clanton, Tom and Frank McLaury, and Billy Claiborne, who were allegedly scheming to kill Doc and the Earps.

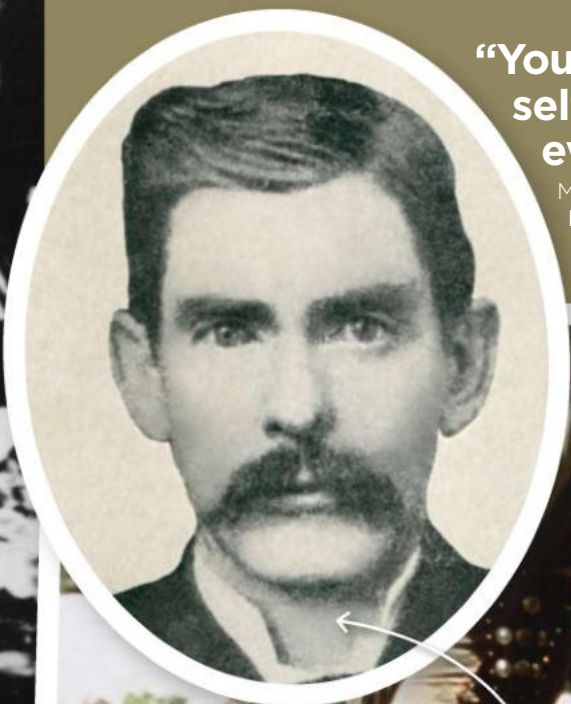
The two groups were standing only two or three metres apart when the shooting started. Who shot first is unclear, but straight away Frank McLaury was hit in the belly by a bullet from Wyatt. Doc blasted Frank’s brother Tom in the chest with a shotgun, which he then discarded for his favourite nickel-plated revolver to finish off Frank with a shot to the head. Morgan was injured by a single bullet that struck both shoulder blades and his spine, but he continued firing, as did Virgil, who picked up a wound in

RIDING FOR REVENGE

Films such as *Tombstone* generally depict Wyatt as the central hero figure. His name is the best known of the men involved in the gunfight and has become synonymous with frontier justice and integrity. That reputation came not

“You’re the most fallible, stubborn, self-deluded, bull-headed man I’ve ever known in my entire life.”

MAIN: Doc Holliday (Val Kilmer) accompanied his friend Wyatt Earp (Kurt Russell) on his vendetta ride following the attacks on Wyatt’s brothers
LEFT: Holliday had suffered from tuberculosis since 1873. When he died, aged 36, his final, enigmatic words were allegedly: “Damn, this is funny”.



THE NAME ON THE TOMBSTONE

The Arizona town got its unfortunate name from prospector Ed Schieffelin, who discovered silver in the area in 1877. He had been told that **all he would ever find was his own tombstone**, so he named the community after that joke. In the four years before the gunfight, the population of the town grew from nothing to 7,000.

WHAT’S UP, DOC?

Doc Holliday is played with mischievous panache by Val Kilmer in *Tombstone* as a **feared gunslinger and marksman**. Some accounts, though, claim he wasn’t a very good shot: in nine shoot-outs he killed only three men.

were again not prosecuted, Wyatt turned his back on the legal system and formed a posse. From 20 March to 15 April, with Doc riding alongside him, Wyatt pursued the men responsible. In *Tombstone*, this ‘vendetta ride’ is portrayed as almost a one-man war against the Cowboys in which dozens are gunned down and the criminal gang is crippled, with Wyatt frantic to kill the leader, Johnny Ringo. In reality, Earp’s posse killed just four men. His was not a noble crusade for justice but a personal vendetta.

Wyatt’s quest for vengeance is the reason he gets top billing in any account of the events that took place in Tombstone. His reputation kept growing, especially after the publication of *Wyatt Earp: Frontier Marshall*, written by Stuart Lake with Wyatt’s collaboration shortly before his death in 1929. In the book, the Clantons and McLaurys are the bad guys while the Earps represent true bastions of frontier justice – an image that suited

Hollywood films perfectly. Wyatt became a hero, played by the likes of Henry Fonda, Burt Lancaster and *Tombstone*’s Kurt Russell, and the story has been told in a variety of romanticised interpretations. *Tombstone* is a thrilling film, with a scene-stealing performance by Val Kilmer as Doc, but it is certainly a melodramatic telling of the tale.

We’re still waiting for a historically accurate version of what happened, but a small bronze plaque in *Tombstone* attempts to show the Cowboys as something more than just the bad guys. It is dedicated not to the Earps or Doc but to the dead McLaurys, and reads: “One owes respect to the living, but to the dead one owes nothing but the truth.”



WHAT DO YOU THINK?

Were the Earps the good guys or did they abuse their powers to commit murder?

Email: editor@historyrevealed.com

Ones to watch: the OK Corral

My Darling Clementine

(John Ford, 1946)

An even more romanticised tale of the shoot-out, starring Henry Fonda as Wyatt Earp.

Hour of the Gun

(John Sturges, 1967)

James Garner gives a wonderful portrayal of Wyatt’s descent from lawman to vigilante hell-bent on vengeance.

Wyatt Earp

(Lawrence Kasdan, 1994)

Released just after



Kevin Costner in the titular role of the 1994 epic

Tombstone, this epic western starring Kevin Costner claims to be the most accurate cinematic portrayal of events.

Escape from Alcatraz

Jonny Wilkes reveals how an ingenious plan, involving papier-mâché heads and a homemade (well, cell-made) raft, may have seen three prisoners achieve the impossible

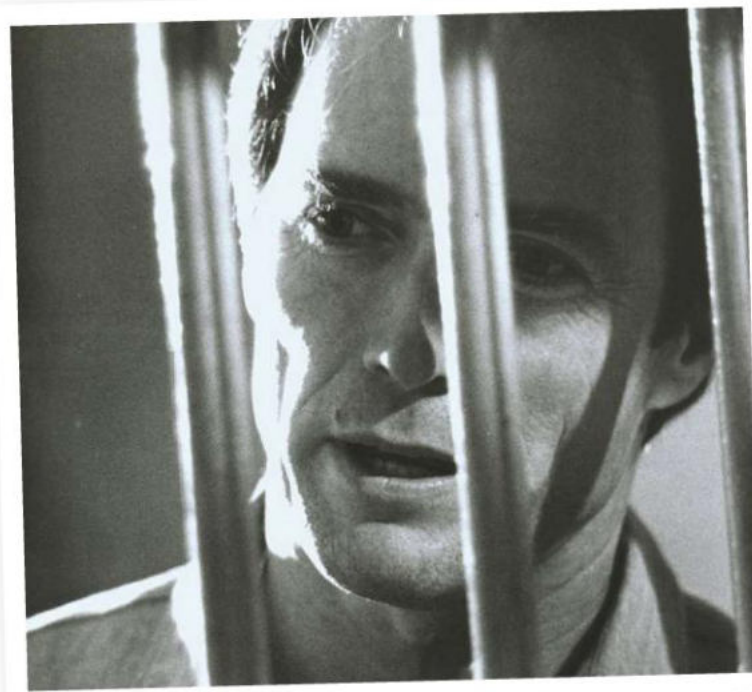
Alcatraz had been built as a fortress designed to keep enemies out, yet it became really good at keeping people in. For 29 years, from 1934 to 1963, the small island in San Francisco Bay housed the toughest, most notorious maximum-security prison in the United States, where the 'worst of the worst' were sent. Think Al Capone, George 'Machine Gun' Kelly and Public Enemy #1 Alvin 'Creepy' Karpis.

Escaping from 'the Rock' was deemed impossible. Guards counted the inmates – living in single cells, about three by 1.5 metres big – 13 times a day and watched every step in the dining hall, workshops and recreation yard. Doors and corridors were barred, crack-shot officers scanned the perimeter from guard towers, and let's not forget the freezing, strong Pacific waters surrounding the facility.

Of the 36 prisoners who attempted breakouts, 23 were recaptured, six shot and two drowned. The other five disappeared, presumed dead. Yet questions remain over the fates of three men who got off the island in June 1962. Their scheme of astounding ingenuity and resourcefulness is the basis of *Escape from Alcatraz*, a thriller that leaves you wondering if the much-feared prison deserved to be called escape-proof after all.

FORMULATING A PLAN

Like an old horror movie, the film opens with Frank Morris (Clint Eastwood's noble, quiet hero) first setting eyes on the Rock through the torrential rain of a storm. A thunderclap even echoes out at the moment he is shoved into his cell



BETWEEN THE ROCK AND A HARD PLACE

Since its inauguration in 1981, the Escape from Alcatraz Triathlon has included a **1.5-mile swim from the island**, proving that it is possible – although the competitors benefit from wearing proper wetsuits.

"No one has ever escaped from Alcatraz. And no one ever will."

LEFT: Clint Eastwood as inmate Frank Morris, who was rumoured to have an IQ of over 130.

MAIN: Alcatraz prison, in the middle of San Francisco Bay. The facility's maximum security procedures meant that it cost \$10 per prisoner per day – the average in other prisons was \$3.

before a guard menacingly announces, "Welcome to Alcatraz".

Morris spent much of his life behind bars, for crimes ranging from drug possession to armed robbery, but the authorities made the decision to transfer him to Alcatraz in January 1960, making him prisoner #AZ1441, for causing trouble in his previous prison in Atlanta. His reported IQ of 133 made him a constant escape risk.

Life in Alcatraz ran by a slow, strictly controlled schedule, other than for prisoners being punished with a spell in 'the Hole', pitch-black cells infamous for ill treatment suffered at the hands of guards. The brutality of the Hole is depicted in *Escape from Alcatraz*, when

Morris is hosed down and left for days without food or light after fighting with a fellow prisoner.

Time-filling jobs in the laundry, cobblers or tailors were considered a privilege, as were books, occasional film screenings and the limited time in the yard. What Alcatraz did give its inmates, though, was time to think. When Morris spotted a weakness in the facility – years of exposure to salty air had caused the concrete walls in the cell blocks to deteriorate – a plan began to formulate.

For it to work, he teamed up with John and Clarence Anglin (who he knew from his time in Atlanta) and Allen West, a neighbouring inmate. As Allen West failed to join the final escape, so served

THE FACTS

Release date: 1979

Director:

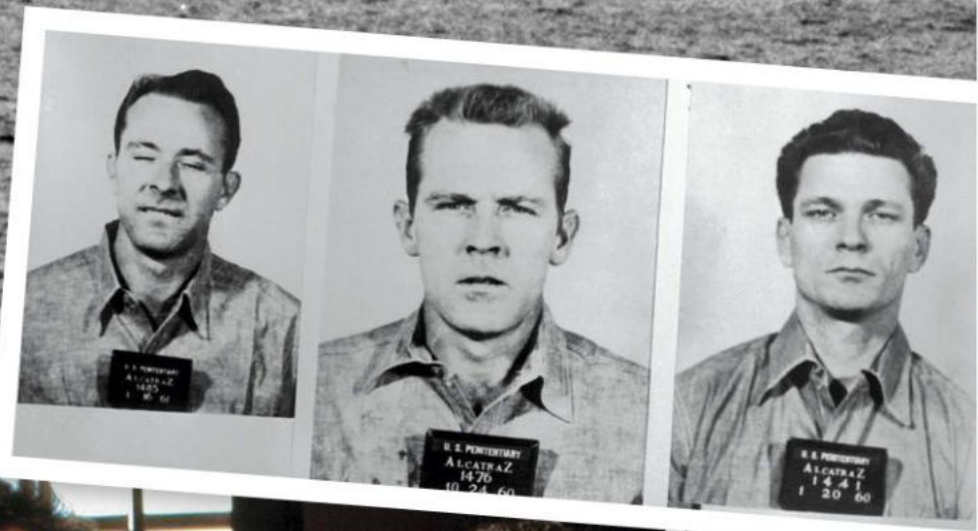
Don Siegel

Cast:

Clint Eastwood,
Patrick McGeehan,
Fred Ward,
Jack Thibaut,
Larry Hankin

Fun fact: Filming on location at Alcatraz, the cast and crew got a real sense of the cold, windy and lifeless conditions felt by the inmates before them.

“This had been one of the most sophisticated and well-executed escapes ever seen”



“If you disobey the rules of society, they send you to prison. If you disobey the rules of the prison, they send you to us.”

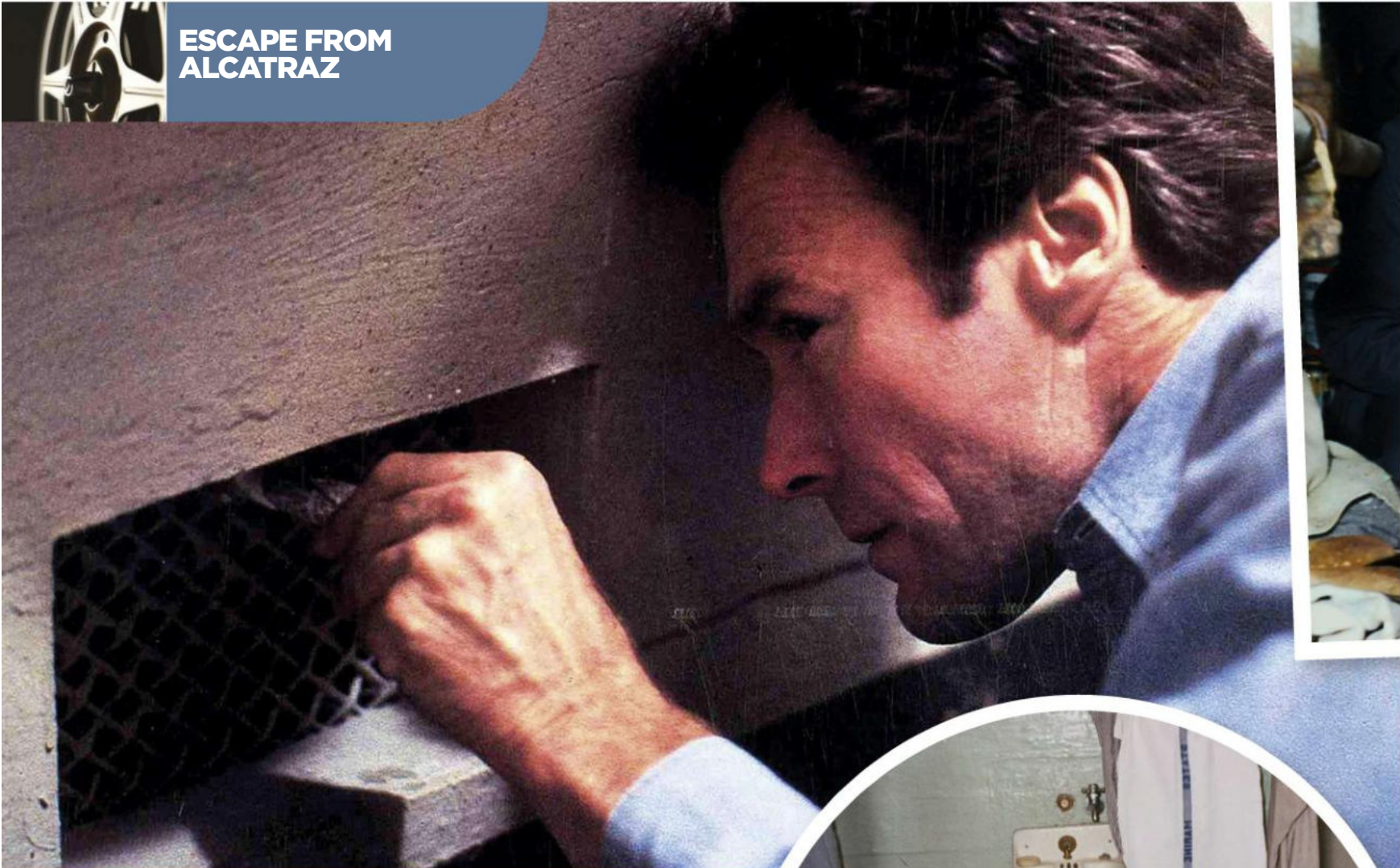
TOP RIGHT: Mug shots of (from left to right) Clarence Anglin, his brother John and Frank Morris.

RIGHT: Morris (Eastwood) and Charley Butts (Larry Hankin) inspect a metal wedge made in the carpentry shop to knock the grill out of the wall.



THE FOURTH ESCAPEE

The day after Allen West (whose name was changed to Charley Butts in the film) couldn't get out of his cell in time to escape with the others, he revealed everything. He even **claimed to be the mastermind** behind the plan.



“This is the Rock, man. They don’t want you to do anything here but time.”

ABOVE: A plan is born when Clint Eastwood’s Frank Morris notices that the walls of his Alcatraz cell are crumbling.

RIGHT: John Anglin’s cell, photographed after the escape, complete with his dummy head and small hole (obscured by hanging clothes).



USE YOUR HEAD

The escape wasn’t discovered until the morning after, due to the effectiveness of the dummy heads. The Anglin brothers nicknamed theirs ‘Oink’ and ‘Oscar’.

out his sentence before dying in 1978 (at the same time as the film’s production), his name was changed in the film to Charley Butts.

Beginning in December 1961, the escape plan took six months to prepare. To get out of their cells and into the disused corridor behind Block B, the four men widened their cells’ air vents by hacking at the concrete holding the grill to the wall. They used saw blades discovered in the grounds and spoons, sharpened by melting down silver dimes.

MAKESHIFT TOOLS

It was slow work and meant working in pairs; while one man, laying on his back, chipped away with rudimentary tools, the other kept watch. Despite the size of the cells – consisting of nothing more than a cot, desk, sink, toilet (with zero privacy) and odd acquired bits – they managed to hide their work with

replica sections of wall made out of old magazine pages. Once Morris and the Anglins made holes big enough to crawl through, they set to work on getting through the vent to the roof.

As West struggled to remove his cell’s grill, the other three built a makeshift drill, thanks to a motor purloined from a vacuum cleaner (this was changed to a fan in the film). To hide the sound, they only used it when inmates were permitted to play musical instruments. So their absence wouldn’t be noticed, the plotters made use of their toilet paper and soap to sculpt a dummy head each, painted with the art supplies and topped with real hair from the prison barbers. Although hardly realistic, they were good enough to convince patrolling guards that the inmate was sound asleep under his blankets, rather than out of the cell.

There was one final item they had to make with whatever resources available:

a raft to get them from Alcatraz to the intended destination on Angel Island. They gathered

50 raincoats – some donated by fellow prisoners – and glued or stitched them together. While they were at it, they made lifejackets too. To inflate the raft, other than with lung power, they nabbed a concertina to use as bellows. It is thought that Morris learned all the tricks of their homemade items through copies of do-it-yourself magazine



“I may have found a way out of here.”

LEFT: In the disused corridor behind Block B, an Alcatraz guard inspects the hole that allowed one of the inmates to get out of his cell. He is holding the mock section of wall, which kept the escape plan secret.

BELOW: A US Coast Guard helicopter and ship scour San Francisco Bay for Frank Morris and the Anglins. Recent research has revealed that the success of the escape depended on timing. If the men entered the water before 11pm, they would have been pulled out to the Pacific Ocean. If after midnight, they would have been dragged into the bay. They had one hour to get it right.

“They built a makeshift drill, thanks to a motor purloined from a vacuum cleaner”



Popular Mechanics. There was no doubt that this would be one of the most sophisticated and well-executed prison escapes ever seen.

LAST SIGHTING?

After lights-out on 11 June 1962, Morris put the plan into action, even though West still hadn't got out of his cell. He was left behind, and Morris and the Anglins had disappeared by the time he got out, leaving him no choice but to go back to his cot. The feeling of betrayal must have been strong, as West would later assist the official investigation. The others made it to the roof, shimmed down a pipe to the ground, climbed a barbed-wire fence and reached the shore. That is the last thing known about all three men. The intense search the following day found nothing, save for a little bag made out of a raincoat, with personal items belonging to the Anglins inside, on the shore of Angel Island.

For the sake of a happy ending, *Escape from Alcatraz* strongly implies that the men survived the trip across the water

– a yellow flower, which symbolised freedom to Morris, was found by the warden on Angel Island. Yet the truth is still not known, and may never be. The FBI called an end to the investigation in 1979, but the US Marshals Service have kept their case file open. There have been sightings and circumstantial evidence to suggest the Anglins survived at least, but the official position remains that all three drowned as heavy currents and icy waters made their attempt impossible. Yet it was supposed to be impossible to break out of the prison at all.

Even if Morris and the Anglins didn't survive, their escape did achieve a victory over Alcatraz. In the aftermath of the inquiry, it wasn't just the physical state of Alcatraz that was crumbling, but its reputation. Less than a year later, the Rock was closed down for good. 📍



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Ones to watch: Prison movies

The Great Escape

(John Sturges, 1963)
The classic story of WWII POWs who devise an audacious plan to dig to freedom, with clothing, passports and rations for hundreds of escapees.

Papillon (Franklin J Schaffner, 1973)
Suffering awful conditions in a French Guyana prison, Henri 'Papillon' Charrierre (another Steve McQueen performance) will do anything to escape.

Hunger
(Steve McQueen, 2008)
Michael Fassbender gives



Steve McQueen races for the border in WWII epic *The Great Escape*

a stirring performance as Provisional Irish Republican Army member Bobby Sands, who goes to extreme lengths to stand up against imprisonment.





THE DEVIL IS IN THE DETAIL
Alcatraz was known as the toughest
prison in America before it was
closed on 21 March 1963

GETTY

THE LAST KING OF SCOTLAND

Like Amin and the 'royal' title he claimed, the film grasps reality somewhat loosely. Fact-based fiction may tell a good story, but it can distract from the crucial messages, says **Jonny Wilkes**

After watching Kevin Macdonald's hard-hitting *The Last King of Scotland*, it wouldn't be surprising if many were left thinking, "Wow, did that really happen? Did a young Scottish doctor really find himself at the heart of Idi Amin's Ugandan regime, fall for one of his wives, remain naive to the worst of the dictator's atrocities and, when facing certain death, make a daring escape by sneaking onto a plane?" Well, unfortunately, no. The story is too good to be true, grounded in Giles Foden's novel rather than fact.

This film – while a gripping, performance-driven thriller – is another culprit of stretching the 'based on a true story' tag a bit beyond credulity. There are details from the events in Uganda during Amin's reign, 1971 to 1979, but action centres around James McAvoy's Dr Nicholas Garrigan, a fictionalised foil, there to provide a western perspective on African politics. In fact, if it wasn't for the ferocious Oscar-winning turn by Forest Whitaker, Amin himself could have been sidelined as a secondary character, which would hardly tally with his reputation as a sadistic, mass-murdering dictator.

WARNING SIGNS

What *The Last King of Scotland* doesn't show is how Amin rose to a position to seize power in the first place. With

Uganda being a protectorate of Britain, the young Amin's military career began in the King's African Rifles of the British Colonial Army, where he served as an assistant cook. His officers remembered Amin as uneducated and illiterate – he needed help opening a bank account for his wages – but powerfully built, at well over six feet tall, and a good soldier. He secured several promotions, becoming one of only two Ugandan soldiers at the rank of commissioned officer, yet Amin gained a reputation for violence and cruelty. In signs of what was to come, he tortured for information and would kill suspects intended for arrest.

HEAVY-HANDED

By the time Uganda achieved independence in 1962, Amin had bullied his way into a strong position close to the new Prime Minister, Milton Obote, who was hardly adverse himself to using heavy-handed or corrupt methods. But, after years of a seemingly mutual relationship, Amin heard Obote intended to have him arrested for pocketing military funds, so led a relatively bloodless coup on 25 January 1971. According to *The Last King of Scotland*, this is the same time that Amin injured his hand in a car



"Something hateful and vile"

ABOVE: Forest Whitaker as the Ugandan dictator. In *The New York Times* review, Manohla Dargis wrote: "It's a role rich in gristle and blood, and Mr Whitaker makes the most of it. But what you need in a film about a man who fed the corpses of his victims to the crocodiles is something more, something hateful and vile."

LEFT: Milton Obote, who was ousted as President of Uganda in January 1971 via a coup led by Amin.

FILMOLOGY

Release date: 2006
Director:

Kevin Macdonald
Cast:
Forest Whitaker,
James McAvoy,
Kerry Washington,
Gillian Anderson,
David Oyelowo,
Simon McBurney

Fast fact: To prepare for his role as Amin, Forest Whitaker learned Swahili, met members of Amin's family and stayed in character during production. Once filming was over, Whitaker had a long shower to "wash him off".

accident with a cow and was treated by the passing doctor Garrigan, who he befriended due to his love of all things Scottish. Most Ugandans despised Obote and so welcomed Amin's coup with joy, taking to the streets and cheering. The international community equally celebrated as they hoped that this change would bring a more peaceful and less corrupt reign to the country, something Amin encouraged by making gestures, such as freeing political prisoners and dismantling the secret police. Like the fictional Garrigan, people were won over by his occasional amiability, charisma and grand promises – but the pretence didn't last long.

Throughout his eight-year rule, Amin could demonstrate buffoonish



SUCKER PUNCH

Before he was a murderous despot, Idi Amin held the **light-heavyweight boxing title** in Uganda from 1951 to 1960.

“Amin felt an affinity with the plight of the Scots against English rule”



THE KILLING OF KAY AMIN

In the film, the fictional Nicholas Garrigan sleeps with one of Amin's wives, Kay, for which she is killed. The real Kay did have an affair, but with a Ugandan doctor - **her death, however, was equally brutal.**

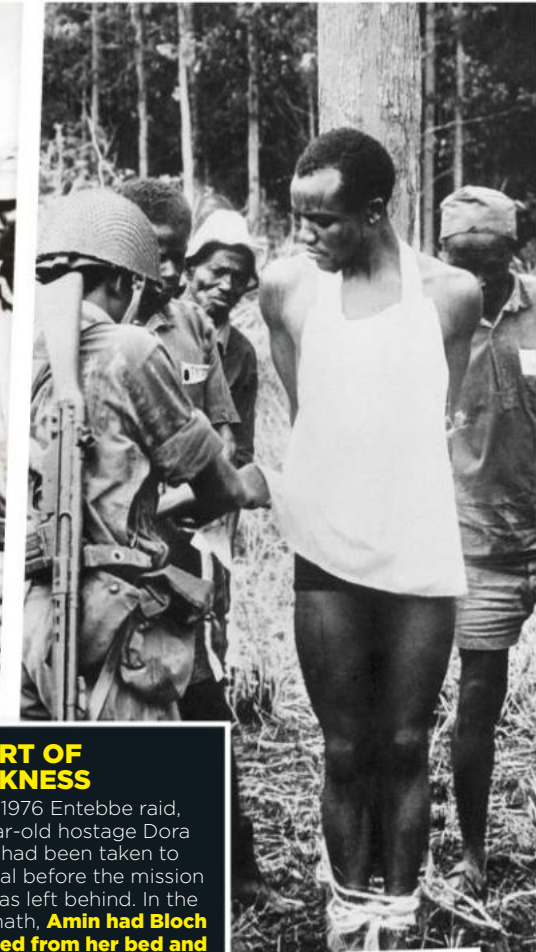
behaviour that belied his image as a murderous dictator. The full title he awarded himself, for example, was “His Excellency President for Life, Field Marshal Al Hadji Doctor Idi Amin, VC, DSO, MC, Lord of All the Beasts of the Earth and Fishes of the Sea, and Conqueror of the British Empire in Africa in General and Uganda in Particular”.

And it wasn't a Scottish doctor that gave Foden's novel and Macdonald's movie their title, but Amin himself. He felt an affinity with the plight of the Scots against English rule so named himself the 'Last King of Scotland', discussed raising an army for the cause of Scottish independence and gave some of his many sons names such as

Amin's five wives: divorced, deserted and died

BOTTOM RIGHT: Amin with his final wife, Sarah, in 1975, who survived him and set up a hair salon in Tottenham. He married at least five women - his first and second wives, Malyamu and Kay in 1966, Nora in 1967 and Nalongo Madina in 1972. On 26 March 1974, he announced on Radio Uganda that he had divorced Malyamu, Nora and Kay. Malyamu moved to London, Nora fled to Zaire and Kay died in hospital in mysterious circumstances.





HEART OF DARKNESS

In the 1976 Entebbe raid, 75-year-old hostage Dora Bloch had been taken to hospital before the mission and was left behind. In the aftermath, **Amin had Bloch dragged from her bed and shot**, as well as the medical staff who tried to help her.



“It’s not for me. I tried human flesh and it’s too salty for my taste”

ABOVE: Larger-than-life both physically and metaphorically, Amin possessed a brilliant sense of leadership as a performance and his PR was provocative. Smiling into cameras, he dropped verbal bombs alluding to cannibalism, autocracy and genocide. TOP RIGHT: A public execution by one of Amin’s death squads. BOTTOM RIGHT: Passports of dead victims. At one point, a dam in the Nile became clogged by bodies dumped in the river.

McKenzie and Mackintosh. He was all too happy to antagonise the English at any opportunity, even the Queen. He would send provocative, or downright insulting, telegrams to world leaders, but to Elizabeth II, Amin sent an invitation to Uganda so the Queen (or “Liz” as he addressed her) could meet a “real man”.

Yet Amin could swing from an eccentric to a sadistic tyrant at a moment’s notice. Shortly after his coup, he set about removing any remaining Obote supporters in deadly purges. The army was decimated in his first year, only to be rebuilt with young men from his own people, the Kakwa, and politicians would mysteriously disappear or end up dead in highly suspicious circumstances. The Acholi and Lango tribes were especially targeted by Amin’s death squads.

Soon, the people of Uganda grew to fear agencies established to quash opposition, with the sinister names of

Public Safety Unit and State Research Bureau. People were tortured and murdered in their thousands – at one point, a dam in the Nile became clogged by the bodies dumped in the river. Far from watching the brutality from afar, Amin revelled in the horrific violence. He kept photographs of victims (many bludgeoned by sledgehammers), fed corpses to crocodiles and was reported to be a cannibal, eating the flesh of his murdered enemies. An estimated 300,000 people died under Amin, dubbed the ‘Butcher of Uganda’.

EXECUTIONS ON TV

The enemies Amin didn’t kill, he kicked out of the country. In 1972, he announced that everyone of Asian descent, around 60,000 people, had 90 days to leave Uganda, calling them “bloodsuckers”. In fact, the opposite was true, as many owned businesses and were significant contributors to the

nation’s income. The Ugandan economy plummeted with their expulsion and shops couldn’t supply staple foods, such as sugar, butter and salt, which led to an increase in black-market smuggling. Amin’s response: public, televised executions of anyone caught.

With each new horror and atrocity coming out of Uganda, Amin became a loathed figure around the world – a symbol of evil from a continent where dictators and regimes were all too common. He made his contempt for his international reputation clear in 1976 when he allowed a plane hijacked en route from Israel to France to land at his country’s Entebbe airport. With Amin directly involved in the crisis, the non-

A REAL MAN

As well as insulting telegrams to the Queen inviting "Liz" to Uganda to meet a "real man" and **claiming to be the 'Conqueror of the British'**, Amin awarded himself the 'Victorious Cross', a medal to imitate the VC.

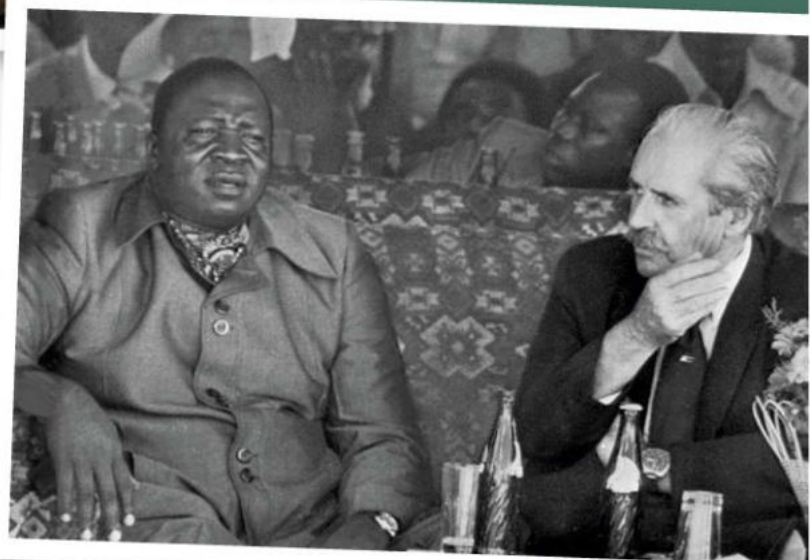


"When the story of Amin's regime is so fascinating, and horrifying, it's a strange choice to hinge the film on something that didn't actually happen"

LEFT: The film's action centres around James McAvoy's fictional Dr Nicholas Garrigan, presumably to provide a western perspective on African politics.

BELOW: Amin with his British aide Robert 'The White Rat' Astles, May 1978.

"An estimated 300,000 people died under the 'Butcher of Uganda'"



Israeli hostages were freed but it took a crack team of Israeli commandos to get all but three of the remaining 103 out. Humiliated by the speed of the rescue mission, Amin took revenge by killing hundreds of Uganda-based Kenyans (the hostages had been taken to Kenya) and the final hostage, who had been taken to a nearby hospital.

RAID ON ENTEBBE

The Entebbe raid is where *The Last King of Scotland* ends, with a tortured and bloodied Garrigan fleeing for his life aboard the plane filled with the hostages. That, in essence, sums up the problem with the film's focus on a fictional character – Garrigan's thrilling (but fictitious) escape distracts from real events. So much so, that people are left wondering whether he actually was based on a real person, and the far more important issues the film could raise are almost lost.

There may be a connection between the character of Garrigan and Bob Astles, a British soldier and member of Amin's inner circle (nicknamed the 'White Rat'), but he was a complicit

player. Throughout the film, meanwhile, the audience is asked to believe that Garrigan is ignorant of the extent of the atrocities, which means the true horrors seen in Uganda are far from explored and sympathies for the young doctor wane quickly.

Amin remained in power until 1979, when an ill-judged invasion of Tanzania backfired and the Ugandan forces – used to beating unarmed civilians – were overwhelmed. When Tanzanian troops neared the capital of Kampala, Amin fled. He lived in Saudi Arabia until his death in 2003, without ever facing justice.

The Last King of Scotland is well-made and is lucky to have such a striking performance by Whitaker, but when the story of Amin's regime is so fascinating, and horrifying, it's a strange choice to hinge the film on something that didn't actually happen. 📍



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Ones to watch: Enemies of the state

The Killing Fields

(1984) Based on the real experiences of journalists Dith Pran and Sydney Schanberg, trapped in Cambodia during tyrant Pol Pot's bloody 'Year Zero' cleansing campaign, which claimed the lives of two million 'undesirable' civilians.



Haing S Ngor as Dith Pran in 1984's *The Killing Fields*

The Lives of Others

(2006) Ulrich Muehe gives a heart-breaking performance as Captain Gerd Wiesler, an agent of the Stasi, East Germany's brutal secret police, sent to monitor a liberal writer. A must-watch.

The Devil's Double

(2011) Bloody violence is all in a day's work for the son of Saddam Hussein (Dominic Cooper) and the man forced to be his double.

AFTER THE FALL

A portrait of Idi Amin still hangs in the window while secret files lay scattered at the dreaded State Research Bureau's headquarters after the fall of Kampala

GETTY



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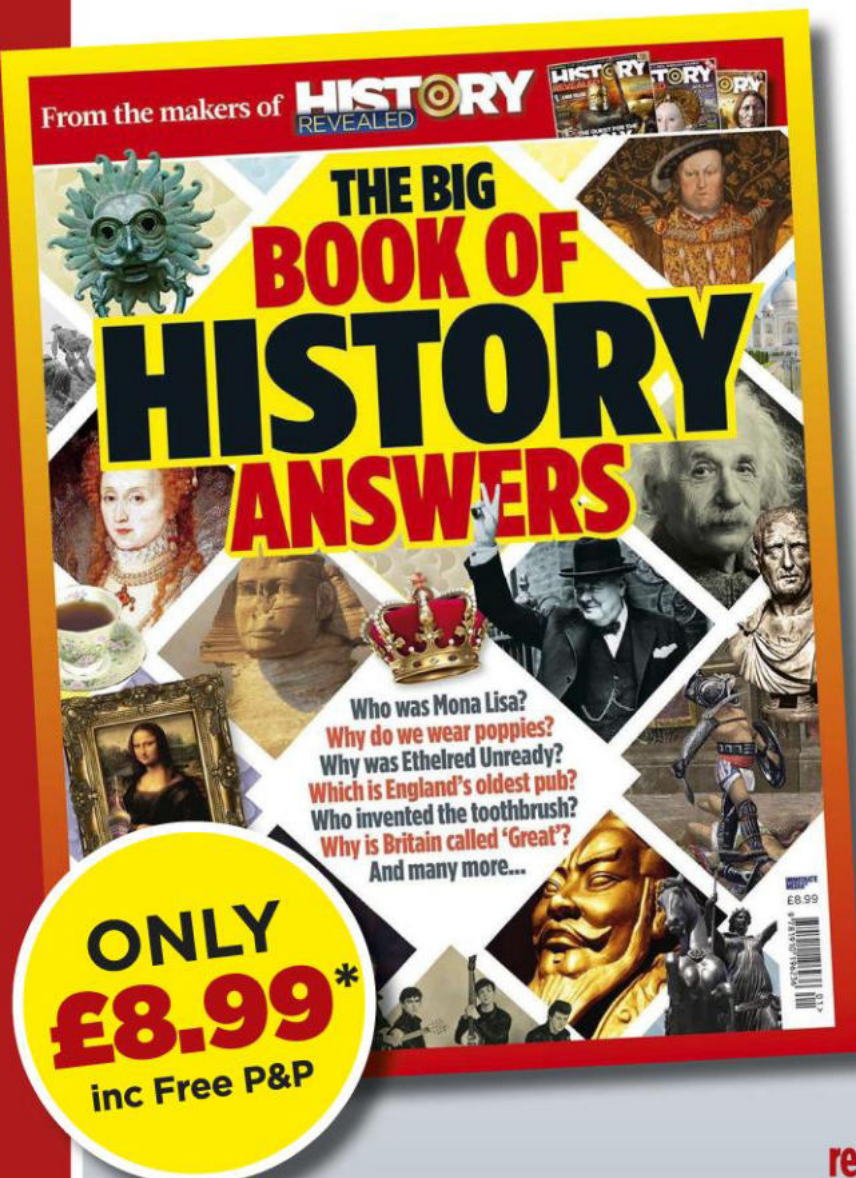
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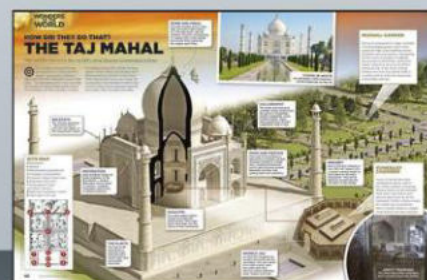
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**"They may take
our lives, but
they'll never take
our freedom!"**
Braveheart

**"You can serve
Germany or
the Führer, but
not both"**
Valkyrie

**"We've never lost
an American in
space, we're sure as
hell not gonna lose
one on my watch!"**
Apollo 13

**"I was only ever mixed
up in one shooting – just
one. But a man lost his
life and I took it"**
Tombstone

**"If this factory ever produces
a shell that can be fired, I'll
be very unhappy"**
Schindler's List

**"As far back as I
can remember,
I've always
wanted to be
a gangster"**
Goodfellas

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